

THE 294 C38

HISTORY

OF

CROESUS King of LYDIA,

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In IV. Parts.

Walter Anderson
CONTAINING

OBSERVATIONS,

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| I. On the antient notion
of destiny. | IV. And the principles
upon which their re-
sponses were defend-
ed against any at-
tack. |
| II. On dreams. | |
| III. On the origin and
credit of oracles. | |

[by Walter Anderson]

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REMARKS

UPON

The EPISODES of HERODOTUS's HISTORY,

AND

On the Subject of ORACLES.

EPIC poetry was carried to perfection in Greece, before its rules were known. Natural force of genius and capacity in Homer displayed all the true sublime of the epic muse; and from the just criticism of his work, the art and method of that species of composition were distinguished, and approved. For the space

of near four hundred years, the Grecian taste and ingenuity appear to have been entirely turned to poetry. Being charmed with the *Iliad* and *Odyſſey*, they reliſhed no other productions, but what, like theſe, had the agreeable ornaments of fable, lively deſcription, marvellous incidents, and harmonious numbers. All the different branches of *poeſy* were, therefore, ſucceſsfully, cultivated among them. The moſt celebrated writers of pastorals, odes, and dramatic pieces, ſoon appeared; but no hiſtorian, that we know, wrote, with any reputation, before *Herodotus*. It may be obſerved, from the account *Diogenes Laertius* gives of the *Wiſemen*, who flouriſhed about ſixty years before that author's time, that they were all not only great admirers of the poets, but much accuſtomed to compoſe in verſe. The poems of *Homer* had the approbation of *Solon*, and other reformers of ſtates and commonwealths, that
were

were cotemporary with him; as containing the finest lessons of wisdom and policy. So that the *position* which the zealous partizans of the *father* of verse are said to have advanced, seems to have been, for some ages, admitted in Greece: *That, in order to reach the point of perfection in the arts, men had need of no other guide but Homer; and that it was altogether sufficient for this, to study and understand him.*

HERODOTUS, following the bent of his natural genius, undertook to celebrate, in history, the victories of the Greeks over the Barbarians. His subject resembled that of the *Iliad*; and the overthrow of Xerxes's numerous forces, by sea and land, was an atchievement much more grand and illustrious, than the taking of Troy. The design of such a work, as well as the prevailing taste of the Grecians, engaged him to give it every agreeable ornament; and to embellish it with epi-

fodes, in the manner of Homer. He travelled into Ægypt, and over Persia, to get the best information he could of the antiquities, the religion, the laws, and customs of these countries; which either gave birth to, or were the very scenes of those actions he intended to describe. The Greeks were manifestly ignorant in all these particulars; tho' many of their religious opinions and ceremonies had been originally derived from Ægypt. The veil of symbols and mystery, which the Ægyptian priests had industriously spread over all branches of science and literature among them, and under which they had even concealed the records of their history, rendered it extremely difficult, for strangers especially, to take an exact plan of their sacred and civil institutions. Herodotus, however, from a survey of such materials as he could have access to, and, where no better information presented itself, from the traditional stories

stories of the priests, composed an abstract of the Ægyptian history; in which, among many material things, he had occasion to trace the origin of some of the Grecian fables, and explain several curious questions relating to the *theology* and the oracles of his country.

THE history of the Persians formed also a necessary part of Herodotus's plan. They were the people who had not only stretched their empire over the greatest part of the continent of Asia, but carried their arms into Ægypt, and the country of the Scythians; and whose over-grown power had threatened total destruction to Greece. But to give any precise account of the rise of their monarchy, and how it came to be established upon the ruin of that of the Medes, proved not an easy task. The archives of Persia, we may believe, were not open, but to people in high office and favour at court. The little connexion and interest that any of the
Greeks

Greeks can be supposed to have had there, kept them from knowing many important passages in the reigns of the Persian Kings. Hence we see that Herodotus, who has very justly described the customs and manners of the people in Persia, of which he might take a near inspection, could do no more than patch up a history of Cyrus, from the current reports about him; and these he * owns to be various and uncertain: The fables he relates of this Prince's birth and education, being similar to those told in every nation, concerning its first hero. The time to free history altogether from the shell of fiction, was not yet come in Greece. Herodotus attempted it not; nor could he have succeeded in such a design, when he ranged in so wide a field, and inserted in his work, a sketch of the history of almost all the nations, with whom the Greeks had been concerned, either in affairs of peace or war.

* Lib. i.

war. It is remarkable, that the history of Cyrus and the Persians remained very doubtful, forty years after Herodotus wrote; so that Ctesias, who cured the wound Artaxerxes received in battle with his rival brother, Cyrus the younger, and pretended to have extracted his accounts from the Persian records, found no better authority than that of Herodotus to oppose himself to; which might have deterred him from publishing a mass of ridiculous fables and inconsistencies. Xenophon, therefore, had still a fair opportunity to write of Cyrus what specious things he pleased; to represent, in the life of so great a Prince, the maxims of the wisest policy in monarchical government; and clothe, with probability and an air of truth, a piece of history so uncertain and obscure.

FROM this general criticism of Herodotus's history, we may infer, That his love of the marvellous ought truly
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to be imputed to the age, and the disadvantageous circumstances, in which he wrote ; and that, if he was led into mistakes about facts, it proceeded from the variety and vast extent of his subject, and not from his indulging his own vein of fiction, and a disposition to propagate the forgeries of his imagination for truth. He candidly tells us, in several places, of his advancing many things, not as certainties, but only upon general report, and the authority of others. Such an apology may be offered for the most exceptionable parts of his work : Many of his episodes need it not ; and that of Croesus, which is copied in the following pages, as little as any of them. The King of Lydia being the first who retrenched the liberty of the Grecian cities in Asia, his actions must have drawn the attention of Greece. Sages, and poets, from thence frequented his court ; were acquainted with his character ;

racter ; and would find occasion, in all places whither they went, to repeat whatever they knew of the designs and enterprizes of a Prince then so much renowned. By his celebrated intercourse with the Delphian oracle, he became particularly connected with some of the Grecian states : Ambassadors went from him to form alliances with them ; and the valuable pledges of his devotion to their Apollo, remained in their temples and public treasuries, for the inspection of the curious, and the entertainment of posterity.

It may be presumed that Herodotus wanted not sufficient materials for a more particular history of Croesus, had the scheme of his subject permitted him to enlarge upon it. But, where so many *collateral* facts were to be digested in it, even the parts of any episode, however curious and remarkable, behoved to be abridged, and frequently disjoined. That of Croesus, as it lies
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in the original, interspersed through the two first books, has not the common advantage of being read as one story connected and intire. Yet, to have given it, merely, that form in an English translation, would have been showing it in a light as obscure as it is placed in, by several compilers of large tracts, out of antient history. The main parts of the story being very elegantly related in Herodotus, but often too concisely to engage attention, it appeared necessary to raise and heighten them by additional observations and reflexions. In these, a greater liberty might have been indulged, or a heap of small fragments thrown in from different authors: But excursions of this kind are to be cautiously made; lest, as often happens, all art and beauty of composition be disregarded.

THE oracles may be reckoned as much the *spiritual* machinery of Herodotus's work, as the gods themselves,

selves are in Homer. Their responses excite to action, or suspend it; and all important designs and resolutions are regulated by them. The censure past by Plutarch upon that author, for having mentioned two instances * in which the Delphian oracle was corrupted with a bribe, is extremely partial: Since Herodotus throws the blame, not upon Apollo, but on his priestesses; and one of them, he tells us, was degraded from her sacred function, upon a discovery of her guilt. There are few of the many oracular predictions, which he hath collected, that he shews not to have been, in some shape or other, accomplished. His general aim is plainly to raise an admiration of the oracles, and increase that authority and influence they are known to have had in the heathen world. In his account of the King of Lydia's correspondence with the oracle of Delphos, he has taken pains to frame an answer to what might

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* Herodot. lib. v. vi.

he objected against Apollo's equivocal response ; and his apparent unconcern for the fate of a Prince, who seemed every way worthy of his protection and favour. The suspicion, indeed, which Croesus is represented to have had about the supernatural knowledge and veracity of the oracles, intimates that there were, even in those early times, some particular people who were disposed to question their high pretensions to a divine original and authority ; but the evidence given of the Delphian god's omniscience, and the sudden subversion of the Lydian kingdom, seem to be placed together on record, the one as a convincing, and the other as a *terrifying* argument, to all who, like Croesus, might be inclined to require solutions of hard questions, and propound inquiries that implied an unbecoming distrust of the oracles. This passage of Croesus's history might have led to a distinct consideration of that question

question about the oracles, which has much employed the pens of the learned: Whether their responses are to be altogether regarded as the artful devices of the priests, or as dictated by dæmons, and spirits more intelligent than men? The subject being far too copious to form a part of the following historical piece; the general arguments, on both sides, may here be inserted.

THOSE who maintain the antient oracles to be mere forgeries and imposture, advance the following reasons*: That it may be justly supposed the more cunning and artful would soon take advantage of the natural prejudices and credulity of the bulk of mankind: that there arose early suspicions of such deceit; and not only whole sects of philosophers, but other men, less chargeable with singularity and pride, are known to have treated them, upon occasions, with ridicule and contempt: that there are many instances of oracles being corrupt-

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ed;

* Histoire des oracles.

ed; of their temporizing, and making a gainful trade of their responses: that, some Princes having taken a fancy to establish oracles, answers were returned by them, almost as surprizing as any delivered by the most celebrated ones; antiquity and popular opinion being all they wanted to put them upon the same foot: that the places where the most famous oracles were erected, being rocky grounds, and caverns of the earth, plainly favoured impositions and craft: that the various perfumes in the temples, and the odours made use of in sacrifice; the admission of none to hear the responses, but such as submitted to a course of abstinence and various expiations; the appointment of days for consulting the oracles, their affected silence, and frequent delaying their answers, which, in the end, were generally ambiguous and trifling; must *all* be reckoned the proper machinery which
men,

men, combined to delude others, would chuse, for carrying on their artifices with success: And that, accordingly, upon inspecting many of the Pagan temples, when demolished, they were found commodiously provided with subterraneous passages, covered ways, hollow statues, and other contrivances requisite for imposture. These articles are insisted upon, and the most material of them proved from sufficient authorities, by those who contend that the heathen oracles owed their *being* and credit, wholly, to the fraud and guile of the priests.

SUCH as hold the contrary argument, alledge in opposition to these reasons: That, to talk of the arts of imposture, and the credulity of men, where facts are appealed to, is rather a subterfuge, than just reasoning: that we have no ground for attributing such schemes of craft and deceitfulness to men, in the earlier ages of the world, to which a

character of general simplicity and ignorance belongs ; nor is such a supposition agreeable to the accounts we have in history of the rise of the oldest oracles : that, tho' human skill and foresight might be sufficient to determine, in many cases that came before the oracles, what the event would be ; yet some predictions there are, related by several judicious historians, which nothing less than a degree of supernatural knowledge could have directed : and that, from what is intimated in Revelation, as well as from the general opinion of the first Christians, the agency of dæmons, in perverting the heathen nations, and deluding them by oracles and prophetic responses, ought to be admitted. It is obvious how the question here becomes involved. Examples, in which the oracles predicted things impossible to be known or foreseen by human penetration, must be specified, authorities examined, doubts removed

removed about the terms of the oracular prophecy, the time in which it was delivered, and the manner of its being fulfilled: And lastly, the Scripture-doctrine, and the judgments of the *Christian fathers*, remain to be inquired into.

INSTANCES of such predictions as can be justly accounted miraculous are rarely, if at all, to be met with, amidst the whole mass of oracular responses; if we except those which are, or may easily be proved, the grossest *forgeries*. The discovery which the god of Delphos makes, according to the following history, of what the King of Lydia did, when he boiled a *lamb* and *tortoise* together, can, at most, be reckoned a wonderful one. Apollo, indeed, boasts, in his response, of an omniscient power; as if his knowledge of this secret had been a demonstrative proof of it: But, tho' Croesus allowed it to be so, he certainly made too
wide

wide a concession. In the story we are not even told, that he informed none of the many messengers he sent to the oracles, in what manner he meant to be employed: yet, supposing he used so much precaution, is it not likely, that either, as often happens, he might, out of fondness for the conceit he had formed, communicate it to some of his courtiers; or they, out of curiosity, prompt him to discover his intention? If the secret were only whispered, some of Apollo's well-wishers would carry it to Delphos. That oracle, which is said to have been emitted about Croesus's son who was dumb, comes nearer to the true notion of a prophecy; were not the terms, in which it is expressed, so general, and the manner of relating it so cursory, that it can pass for nothing more than a well-framed admonition to moderate the painful anxiety which Croesus felt about a misfortune that could not be remedied: As his
son's

son's being impelled, at once, to pronounce and apply vocal accents, which he had never done before ; seems a hyperbolic representation of the force and energy of filial affection.

To state such questions, and argue upon them, is more tedious than satisfying to the mind. From examples of the vile ambiguity and chicanery of the oracles ; of their prostitute avarice, and shameful flattery ; of their abusing the simplicity of some who consulted them, and swelling the pride and ambition of others ; we receive the most sensible conviction that there can be nothing more detestable than such a *religious* establishment. Odious with all the circumstances of the basest imposture, the oracles were also the never-failing engines of destruction and bloodshed, among mankind. The common prejudices of men, their natural wishes, their hopes and fears, being all warped in with this system of delusion ; the
generality

generality were engaged to adhere, implicitly, to it: while the designing and ambitious part, who knew how to touch its secret springs, found that their views of interest, their seditious purposes, their schemes of private resentment or of open war, could be more easily carried on under the mask of its authority. The few, who from disappointed projects, or, like Croesus, from curiosity and principle, attempted to raise doubts about the infallibility of the oracles, were always, by some method or other, overcome. If arguments failed, dire imprecations were uttered against them. When the King of Lydia charges the oracle of Delphos with dissimulation and ingratitude, we see not only what sophistry, but what a set of dark and austere maxims, are mustered up in its defence.

THE enthusiastic principles of ages so long past, and the artificial devices then used to work upon the passions of men,
may

may appear, to some, a subject of history not enough interesting in these times. But, if the most essential part of knowledge derived from history, be that of mankind, it surely cannot well be learned, without thoroughly considering the various sentiments and opinions embraced by them, in different ages of the world. Our views of human nature must be partial and confined, if they be only directed to some of its late or present appearances. By carrying our thoughts back into antient times, we may see reason for abating much of the amazement or dislike which is apt to arise in our minds, when we read the religious or political violences marked out in modern history.

BESIDES, we have had, of late, such copious descriptions of the manners and characters common to our own age, that, however just and agreeable these pictures be, with all the changes of style and form into which lively fancy
has

has thrown them, it may prove some relief, if it be no advantage, to survey, upon occasions, some history-pieces drawn by antient writers, whose manner and taste of composition successive ages have approved.

THE

INTRODUCTION

TO THE

HISTORY of CROESUS.

THE Lydians at first were governed by a race of kings called *Atyadæ*; and then by the descendants of Hercules, for five hundred years: till Candaules's time, whose weakness and folly in showing to Gyges, one of his officers, the naked charms of his Queen, was punished by his death, and the advancement of another family to the regal power in Lydia. The opposition at first made to this change by the partizans of the antient race of the *Heraclidæ*, and the friends of the slaughter'd King, was soon suppressed; and a method fallen upon, by an appeal to the oracle of Delphos, for appeasing the murmurs of the people.

GYGES, who had entered into an intrigue with the Queen, and by her management was thus established in the so-

A vereignty,

2 INTRODUCTION.

verignty, began to entertain thoughts of enlarging his dominions, and attacked the towns of Miletus and Smyrna, which bordered upon them. But the reduction of these places proved a work too hard for him, and that could not be accomplished in two succeeding reigns. During that space of time, the irruption of the Cimmerians into Asia minor, had been fatal to almost all its cities. The citadel of Sardis alone remained impregnable to those dreadful enemies; who spread such desolation every where, as was not repaired, till Alyattes, the fourth from Gyges, succeeded to the kingdom of Lydia. He assisted in driving out the Cimmerians; took Smyrna, and attempted to reduce Clazomene: but the enterprize having miscarried, he bent his whole thoughts upon the Milesian war; which he considered as handed down to him by his father; who died, after having been several years engaged in it.

THE

THE method of besieging towns was then little understood; and Miletus being situated upon the sea, could not be invested by an army. Alyattes formed a scheme for taking it in another way. Upon the approach of harvest, he led his forces into the Milesian territory; and made booty of all the product of the season, leaving the villages safe and entire; that the country-people, upon his departure, might return to the sowing and cultivating of their lands. This course he pursued for several years successively; till, having twice drawn the Milesians to battle, he gained two signal victories.

IN the sixth year of the war thus managed, a temple of Minerva happened to be burnt down: the flames that wasted the corn-fields had been driven upon it by the winds. The accident, at the time, was little regarded. But Alyattes, upon his return home, falling ill of a lingering disease, was induced, either from his own impatience, or the

A 2 persuasion

persuasion of others, to send and consult the oracle of Delphos about the issue of his indisposition. Apollo answered, That he should not recover, unless he rebuilt Minerva's temple that was laid in ashes. In order to this, it was necessary to have a truce with the Milesians; which Thrasibulus their chief contrived to turn to their advantage. In the view of the heralds, who came to ask the truce, he took care to have as great a quantity of provisions placed as he could collect from all hands; and, to make shew of vast plenty, the citizens were instructed to feast in public, and entertain one another. The stratagem had the desired effect. The messengers reporting to Alyattes, what abundance of all things they saw in Miletus; he concluded, that if, after the constant ravage of their lands, the people were still so well supplied, it would prove an endless labour to bring them to a surrender by famine. This disposed him to think an alliance and
friendship

INTRODUCTION.

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friendship with them preferable to such a fruitless project. A league being accordingly agreed upon, two temples, instead of one, were built, in reverence of the incensed goddesses.

THUS it appears, that, in the reign of Alyattes the father of Croesus, the Lydians not only enjoyed security at home, but were arrived to a pitch of strength that rendered them formidable to other states; which, in any government, and especially in a monarchical one, is a circumstance extremely requisite for raising and cherishing the spirit of the people. Alyattes's warlike temper, his frequent success against the enemy, and his invading others as their superior in power, must have had a very advantageous influence upon the Lydians. For he kept in awe all the Greek cities, which lay near the confines of Lydia; and while he often acted offensively against them, they either wanted strength or union, to prevent those attacks.

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BUT,

INTRODUCTION.

BUT, of all Alyattes's wars, that which he entered into with Cyaxares Emperor of the Medes, became the most celebrated. It seems to have been begun from mutual jealousy ; and was carried on full five years, with various fortune. And, as the contention for glory was heightened by blows and losses mutually given and received, it would not have ended, but fatally for one of the rival kings ; had not the total eclipse of the sun, famous for being predicted by Thales the Milesian, thrown the two armies, when they stood ready for battle, into a prodigious consternation. As the ardor of the combatants was suspended for a while by this phenomenon, there were proposals of an accommodation made to them, by Syennesis the Cilician King, and Labynetus or Nebuchadnezzar Emperor of Babylon. By the terms of this treaty, Alyattes's daughter, named Aryena, was to be espoused to Astyages the son of Cyaxares.

ALYATTES,

ALYATTES, having contributed so much to the aggrandizing of the Lydian nation, deserved the monument which was erected for him at the public charge. Herodotus describes his sepulchre, as still standing in his time near Sardis: the base of it being composed of stone, and the superstructure of earth extended six furlongs and two hundred feet in circumference; and a thousand three hundred in breadth.

THE

INTRODUCTION

Any art, having connection
with the art of medicine, is
said to be a branch of the
art of medicine, and is
therefore included in the
study of medicine. The
study of medicine is
the study of the art of
healing, and is the study
of the art of curing
disease. The study of
medicine is the study of
the art of curing disease,
and is the study of the
art of curing disease.

T H E
HISTORY OF CROESUS.

P A R T I.

C H A P. I.

*Cræsus, in the beginning of his reign, makes
the conquest of Ionia and Æolia.*

CROESUS, when thirty five years old, succeeded his father Alyattes in the kingdom. Having been trained up under a prince long exercised in war, and animated by his attractive example; it was no wonder, if he contracted, early, a thirst for conquest. He found, favourable to this inclination, the Lydians elevated with the success of their arms; which were become the dread of the neighbouring nations. He was now of an age fully ripe for enterprize, and not altogether void of experience; a circumstance which served to quicken
his

his passion, and inspire him with confidence. He doubted not to render the crown of his ancestors more illustrious, and to acquire a lasting fame to himself.

To invade the settlements of the Asiatic Greeks, had been, for several generations, a hereditary maxim with the Lydian kings. Alyattes, who made the boldest and most resolute attempts upon the Ionians, had, indeed, gained from them great renown for actions of valour; without adding much to his dominions. But he paved the way for conquest, by having frequently beat them in the field. They inhabited a country justly celebrated for the compleatest assemblage of all those bounties of nature, which are dispensed only in separate proportions, over other parts of the earth. Richness of soil, serenity and temperatüre of air; an agreeable and commodious arrangement of hills; and the windings of the finest rivers; rendered Ionia the seat of envied delights. The
Lydians

Lydians were too well acquainted with the fertility and sweetness of this country, not to discover some eagerness for entering it again; which Crœsus did not fail to encourage, by taking the first opportunity to quarrel with the Ionians.

THO' Miletus, the chief city of Ionia, was weakened by the late hostilities, yet Crœsus did not chuse to begin with it; whether out of respect to the treaty concluded by his father, or some more interesting consideration. He resolved to attack Ephesus, * which stood at no greater distance than five hundred furlongs from Sardis, the capital of Lydia. The Ephesians seem to have been left entirely to defend themselves: none of the other nine cities of Ionia affording them any assistance. They were, † we are told, together with the people of Colophon, excluded from the solemn festival of the Panionium,

* Her. Lib. 5. par. 54.

† Her. Lib. 1. par. 147.

um, celebrated upon the promontory of Mycale, in honour of *Neptune*. But it is not very evident, whether they lay under the *interdict* at this time, or how far it might hinder the *confederates* from undertaking their relief, as a common cause.

CROESUS having brought up his army and laid siege to the town; the Ephesians soon gave way to fear and despondency; and had recourse to *Diana* their great patroness. Upon this occasion, she was not only invoked, and sacrificed to, but had the whole city devoted to her, and made her peculiar trust, as much as the temple itself. By a rope extending from thence to the wall of Ephesus, the length of seven furlongs, they expressed the venerable dedication of their town. This religious indication of despair could only hasten the fate of the Ephesians; and they were soon obliged by Croesus to surrender. By submitting to become tributary, they taught the King of Lydia,
how

how the other Ionians might be bent to his yoke, without having garrisons every where to secure their obedience.

THE taking of Ephesus might well have roused the apprehension of its kindred-cities. The alarm was loud, and threatened them all, unless they provided for their general safety. But they seem either to have neglected it, or to have been little disposed to union among themselves. Did their independency occasion this behaviour? Or do such states, as are established for commerce, always behold with small concern the depression of their rivals? 'Tis plain, from Herodotus, that Cræsus was permitted to wage war with the Ionian cities, one by one; and that his pretensions for so doing, tho' altogether weak and frivolous, were never challenged, but by such of them as were forced, for their own security, to oppose him. In this manner, all the towns in the continent of Ionia resigned their liberties to a foreign master.

B

CROESUS

CROESUS did not so closely prosecute the invasion of Ionia, but that, at proper intervals, and as occasions offered, he turned his arms against the Æolians. This artful conduct would, in all likelihood, increase the passive and improvident disposition of the Greeks; since it tended to divert their alarms, and hindered them from perceiving, at once, the full aim of the conqueror. The effect of it sufficiently appeared, by Croesus's having met with so little resistance from two populous nations, while he was always invading the one or the other. Both of them being gradually weakened, found themselves unexpectedly in his power, and proved an easy and valuable conquest.

ÆOLIA had twelve considerable cities belonging to it, without reckoning those in the islands. It was, excepting the advantages of climate and situation, little inferior to Ionia; its fertility being much the same, and its extent greater. Each of them was a colony, which
Greece

Greece had planted, in a part of Asia, the best situated for carrying on all branches of commerce. They soon improved in navigation*; the Phocians of Ionia being the first of all the Greeks who undertook long voyages in light-built ships, with five banks of oars; and, having sailed thro' the Adriatic and Tuscan seas, discovered the coast of Spain and Tartessus. They could not only supply trade with various commodities of their own, but had access, by means of their rivers, to many more found in the inland places of Asia. The constant attention of the Athenians, and other states of Greece, to preserve the freedom and independency of these settlements, arose, not only from their hatred of slavery and the Persians, but from evident views of general interest. The important question was, Whether the most valuable and extensive commerce should remain free in the hands of their natural friends and descendants,

B 2

or

* Herod. lib. i. par. 163.

or be controuled and incumbered at the pleasure of their irreconcilable enemies.

THE King of Lydia was the first who rendered them dependent ; and he understood how to make the most of their subjection. He razed none of their towns, nor dispossessed any of the inhabitants ; tho' the neighbourhood of some of them, so close upon Sardis, might have induced him to such procedure. He was satisfied to grant them full protection, while they paid for it by a general tribute.

CH A P. II.

Cræsus designs to invade the Grecian islands.

The project dropp'd. Large conquests made by him. His renown in war, and the terror of his name.

THE reduction of the Grecian cities by Cræsus gave birth to farther schemes of conquest. The increase of his treasures, a passion for empire,

pire, the handle afforded by fortune, were irresistible motives for him to proceed in his enterprizes. Since he had got footing in a large maritime country, which opened many convenient ports into the Ægean sea; he thought it of much consequence, as well as a proper use of this advantage, to raise a naval force. By means of it, he might be enabled, either to take possession of some of the Grecian islands, or give a check to the islanders, who, by the power of their shipping, kept the dominion of the seas. Besides, until something of this kind was effected, he seemed to hold his late acquisition by a precarious tenure. The islanders would not fail to spirit up their allies in the continent to renounce their vassalage, and furnish them with aid to assert their liberty. Therefore, the King of Lydia determined to equip a fleet for carrying on this expedition. When the necessary preparations were making, and most of the materials in

readiness for building the navy; the design was all at once suspended.

THIS might be owing to Cræsus's deliberating more maturely: but the Greeks reported it as being occasioned by one of their wise men; either Bias of Prienæ, or Pittacus of Mytelene: and thus the story is related by Herodotus. One of the two being at Sardis, Cræsus asked him, What news he heard from Greece? "O King, replied he, the
 "islanders have hired ten thousand
 "horses, intending to march thither
 "and attack you." Cræsus, seeming to take it as a real fact, said, "May the
 "gods put it into the minds of the
 "islanders to come, like boys upon
 "horses, against the Lydians! You
 "pray, added the philosopher, most
 "earnestly, to have a brush with the
 "islanders, turned horsemen on the
 "continent; imagining what would
 "most likely befall them. But what
 "do you think their wish may be? No
 "thing more, upon hearing of your
 "fitting

“ fitting out a fleet for an expedition
“ against them, than to catch the Lydi-
“ ans at sea, and revenge upon you that
“ servitude which the Asiatic Greeks
“ are forced to endure.”

SUCH a repartee might, indeed, make the King of Lydia reflect on the danger of his project, and see more fully, than he had done at a first view, the probable consequence attending it. But, at least, according to the history, he readily took the hint; and had good nature enough to relish the freedom with which it was given. The design of invading the islands being thus judged unsafe and improper to be prosecuted by the Lydians, Croesus let it drop; and, that the face of his affairs, on that side, might not look cloudy, after what he had threatened, he engaged all the Ionian islanders to join in a friendly alliance with him.

THE King of Lydia easily supplied the place of one scheme, which vanished from his thoughts, by forming many others,

others. Being indefatigable in his pursuit of warlike glory and empire, he entered upon a large scene of action. He must, indeed, have been, for some years, incessantly active; when he attacked, with his forces, all the neighbouring countries, to the east, south, and north of the Lydian dominions. He must have often tasted the joy of a conqueror, when he had such fortune in all his various expeditions; that, excepting the Lycians and Cilicians, he left none of the nations, betwixt Lydia and the river Halys, unsubdued. The names of these people are mentioned in Herodotus; but no particulars of Croesus's management, in such a series of war, or the time employed in vanquishing so great a number of antagonists. They were the Phrygians, Mysians, Mariandini, Chalybians, Paphlagonians, Thracians, Thynians, Bithynians, Dorians, Carians, and Pamphilians. The provinces, occupied by all these nations, which Croesus now overcame, together
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with Lydia and the Grecian settlements, formed more than two thirds of Asia minor. This wide region was itself an empire. The vast opulence with which it abounded, afforded a copious subject for the most shining descriptions of the antient poets and historians. * The picture given of it, in our author, by Aristagoras the Milesian chief, when he wanted to entice Cleomenes of Sparta to march his troops into this quarter of the continent, appears, with all the fine colouring, to come short of the idea we form of that wealth, which the Persian monarchs found inexhaustible.

THO' the detail of the battles and campaigns, which Cræsus fought and conducted successfully, be not transmitted by any antient historian; there can be no doubt of his having acted the part of an able commander and given signal proofs of his capacity for war: where so many fundry nations, some of them no-

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* Lib. 5. 49.

ted for their martial spirit and valour, were encountered by him ; it would require a high degree of military skill and bravery to wrest their liberties from them by repeated overthrows. One testimony which antiquity bore to his fame, is mentioned in Athenæus, who relates, from Berofus, That, a signal victory being gained by Crœsus over the Sacæ, a Scythian nation ; the Babylonians, his allies, counted it worthy to be honoured, amongst them, by a yearly festival, which had the name of Sacæa. We find also the following passage in our author, which shows how much his name and power were dreaded by some of the fiercer nations, who dwelt about the coast of the Thracian Bosphorus.

MILTIADES the son of Cypselus, who built a wall across the Chersonesus, for stopping the inroads of the barbarians, had been, in an expedition against the Lampfaceni, drawn into an ambush, and made prisoner by them. Crœsus, upon
getting

getting intelligence of it, sent word to that people to dismiss Miltiades; otherwise he would “strip them like
“a pine.” The Lampfaceni could not, at first, find out the import of this threatening expression; until, after much hesitation, one of their oldest and gravest personages attempted to explain it in this manner: “That the pine of all
“trees, when lopp’d, does not shoot
“forth again; but falls into a total decay.” When the people heard this, from a terror of Cræsus, they presently set Miltiades at liberty.

CHAP.

C H A P. III.

The various inventions and arts of the Lydians. Their wealth and grandeur. The court of Cræsus frequented by the Grecian wisemen. Solon's character as a lawgiver.

IN the reign of Atys, it is said, that the Lydians had suffered a long famine; and that, to divert the sharp sensation of hunger, they contrived many sorts of games, as dice, balls, &c. which kept their minds intent, without any consumption of the animal spirits by bodily action. If necessity did in this manner introduce such inventions as these; it is certain that the affluent state of the nation would, for pleasure's sake, increase and diversify them. And now was the season, when laurels wreathed the arms of Lydia, and the spoils of conquered nations filled her treasures, that she might cherish every agreeable art, and reward its inventor. Whatever industry had before

fore found useful to life, whatever a growing taste for ornament had discovered to charm the public eye, would now be refined upon and improved.

As early as Candaules's time, the Lydians must have entertained a taste for works of beauty and art*: this prince having given, for an admired piece of painting, it's weight in gold. The donations of Gyges to the oracle of Delphos consisted of a number of golden cups, framed in the most curious manner. One of the many other presents given by Alyattes, was a cup of steel, esteemed for its texture and workmanship, the greatest rarity to be seen in the Delphian treasury. To the building of his stately tomb, the artificers, tradesmen and merchants, contributed, each their share; a testimony of the support and encouragement they met with in his time.

INDEED, when we consider the antiquity of the Lydian nation, together

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* Plin. lib. 35. cap. 8.

with that ingenuity which appears to have been natural to the people of their climate ; it gives ground for believing that many useful and amusing inventions were originally derived from them. This opinion is favoured by what we are told concerning the manners of the Lydian people, who used to train up their children carefully, and have them put to industrious and manly employments ; looking upon idleness not only as a vice, but as a crime, which the state was concerned to punish. Plenty, in such hands, would not run into abuse, but be more universally diffused.

THE rendering gold and silver a more fit and ready instrument of traffic, was a Lydian invention. They were the first who coined pieces of both, and regulated their currency ; as all civilized nations since have done, by a determined figure and weight. This will account for the introduction of various branches of commerce amongst them, which could

could not well be managed in other places; where they wanted such a stated and commodious exchange.

THEY were the first also, who sold by retail, kept inns, and mess-houses in their towns; and had shews and sports, for the public entertainment: and from them, both the use and name of the latter, were transmitted, first into Tuscany, and then into the Roman state. Nor are we to take this for an argument, that the Lydians, had a greater bias to pleasure, or were more addicted to those pastimes than the other nations inhabiting the lesser Asia. But their having these receptacles, for societies of men, which were not thought of any where, till trade and abundance introduced them, forms a distinct proof of the uncommon wealth and populousness to which Lydia arrived, before many other countries.

SINCE then, the Lydians were no strangers to the arts, but made such progress in them that their happy influence

was publicly known, under the kings before Croesus ; what more could be wanting to their advancement, or their flourishing in full brightness and perfection, than the favourable sun-shine of his reign ? His large conquests gave access to a variety of the richest materials for the artist's labour, whose invention would be quickened, by the demand for every piece of ingenious work, and the sure prospect of reward and esteem, from a prince, who, as Xenophon reports of him, understood * “ That trade and the “ arts were the genuine source of national wealth and prosperity.” Besides a regard to public utility, he was prompted by another motive ; which, according to the degrees of it, and the characters in which it appears, admits of a different appellation : but whither called vanity, or only a principle of emulation, men are often powerfully roused by it, to laudable action. In Croesus it operated, as a quality worthy
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* Xen. Lib. 7.

of a king, by engaging the attention, and exciting the inventive genius of his people, to the discovery and pursuit of every art and design that tended to display the superior magnificence and glory with which he filled the throne of his ancestors. From all which circumstances, it may be justly presumed, that commerce, with its train of useful and profitable arts, centered in the metropolis of Lydia; and, more than the golden sands of Pactolus, enhanced its riches and splendor: tho' the gains arising from this river, which run through Sardis, after washing the veins of mount Tmolus, be reckoned, by antient authors, * one particular advantage enjoyed by this city; which is declared † “to have been, next to Babylon, the most opulent in all Asia.”

WHILE the matchless affluence and prosperity of Lydia thus shone forth in

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* Strab. Lib. 13.

. Herod. Lib. 5. par. 101

† Xen. Lib. 7.

the auspicious days of Crœsus, many from different nations, attracted either by curiosity, or the hope of advancing their fortunes, repaired to Sardis. Nothing could be more agreeable to the King than this resort of foreigners: any of them who excelled in science or literature might depend upon his countenance and favour; and all of them, upon his protection. For, his esteem of the learned, and his taste for their society, as a becoming ornament of his grandeur, appeared by his inviting several of that select number, who were dignified in Greece with the title of Wisemen, to come and reside at his court. Some of them accepted the generous invitation; but protested as philosophers, that none of the baits of pleasure or vanity allured them.

AMONG others, Solon was much solicited by Crœsus, who had, probably conceived a particular desire to see a man then so renowned in his country; to which he had, in reality, performed
greater

greater service, than all who went before or followed after him. Born with a genius truly elevated, he quickly saw the barbarism of Draco's edicts, and their utter disagreement with the temper of the Athenians : and having himself a happy mixture of those qualities that characterized this people, activity of spirit and love of equality, he had recourse to the only expedient ; which was, to make a total change in the model of government, and establish a system different from the former : in which the laws were not only tempered with mildness, but with a refined delicacy, and the subordinations of the state so nicely adjusted, that whilst the citizens seemed all to rule, the whole were over-ruled by the laws of Athens. Having boldly sustained many rude encounters with factious discontent, and popular fury, he succeeded so far, at last, in quelling all opposition to his vast design, that the Athenian people consented to the admission of his laws ; obliging themselves,

themselves, under the sanction of an oath, not to repeal or alter any of them, for the space of ten years.

SOLON, after these labours, being desirous, both to have some respite, and to allow what remained of the public ferment to subside gradually of itself; he chused, for a season, to leave Athens, and travel into foreign countries. He directed his course to Ægypt, where he knew the inquisitive mind had a rich and wide field to survey. When he had spent some time in conversing with the most learned of the priests in this country, and been courteously received by Amasis, who was then upon the throne; he returned by Cyprus, and some other places, to the coast of Asia; and so came to Sardis.

By a letter * which he wrote before this to Cræsus, he expressed his acknowledgement of the King's humanity and benevolence, and how much more agreeable it might be to stay at his court, than

* Diog. Laer. vita Solonis.

than to go to Athens, where Pisistratus tyrannized; but that his resolution always was, to reside no where, but in a place that enjoyed a free government and equal laws.

C H A P IV.

Solon would not be led to praise the felicity of Cræsus. His story of Tellus; and of Cleobis and Biton. A discourse on human life. Observations on a principle advanced in it.

WHEN the Athenian lawgiver arrived at Sardis, Cræsus treated him with particular marks of distinction and regard; looking upon him as one whose judgment of men and things was valuable, and whose applause he wished to obtain. Having observed that Solon expressed no admiration of the splendor of his court, he directed some of his officers to carry him into the apartments

apartments of his treasury, where he might get a more direct view of the immense riches pertaining to him.

WHILE this dazzling sight was shewn before the Sage, Croesus took an opportunity of addressing him in this manner :
“ My Athenian guest, since fame hath
“ informed us of your wisdom, and also
“ of your eager pursuit of knowledge
“ in various places ; I am much inclined to ask, Which, of all the men
“ known to you, is, in your opinion,
“ to be deemed the happiest ?” In answering this question, the King, no doubt, imagined, that he would readily form a comparison as to the conditions and characters of princes with whom he had conversed, and be disposed to give Him the preference to them all. But Solon, unused to flattery, and reckoning it a breach of truth to disguise his real sentiments, replied, “ He knew
“ none so happy, as Tellus the Athenian.” “ Upon what account, said
“ Croesus,

“ Croesus, do you reckon this man to
“ be so?” “ Tellus, continued Solon,
“ in a time, when it went well with
“ the interest of the commonwealth,
“ had a number of children, that grew
“ up to be citizens of merit and chara-
“ cter, from each of whom there sprang
“ another hopeful progeny, and all of
“ them survived him. And when, as
“ much as mortals can pretend to, he
“ had lived a happy life, he was so for-
“ tunate, as to attain a most illustrious
“ death. For, as the Athenians were
“ engaged in battle with some of their
“ neighbours, near Eleusis, he came, in
“ good time, to their aid; put the en-
“ emy to flight, and bravely fell in the
“ action. His countrymen gave him a
“ noble funeral in the field, and appoint-
“ ed public honours for perpetuating
“ his fame.”

CROESUS heard, with some surprize,
the Sage's encomium on the felicity of
Tellus. But as this instance respected
not the kingly state, he thought proper
to

to put the question once more, and ask,
“ What man he esteemed most happy,
“ after Tellus ?” Solon answered, “ That
“ there were two such known to him,
“ Cleobis and Biton, who had the next
“ claim. For, they being of the oldest
“ Grecian stock, Argives by descent,
“ had all competent means of life, and
“ were, besides, endowed with such
“ bodily strength, that both together
“ gained prizes of victory at the pub-
“ lic games. And, to sum up their
“ history, this is related of them : Their
“ mother, in order to attend a religious
“ festival, celebrated by the people of
“ Argos, in honour of Juno, behoved
“ to be carried in a chariot, with a
“ yoke of oxen, to the temple of the
“ goddess ; the hour of procession
“ came, while the oxen strayed in the
“ field ; the sons, afraid of her being
“ detained from the solemnity, fastened
“ themselves to the yoke ; and, she be-
“ ing seated in the chariot, they drew
“ it along, and reached the temple ;
“ which

“ which was no less than five and forty
“ furlongs distant. This feat having
“ attracted the eyes of the whole assem-
“ bly, the glory of it was crowned with
“ a signal death ; in which the divini-
“ ty shewed, how it was better for a
“ man to die, than to live. For the
“ Argian men extolled, with one voice,
“ this conspicuous act of filial piety ;
“ and the women proclaimed the mother
“ blessed in having born such sons. As
“ now her heart heaved with joy, at
“ the action and the applause which fol-
“ lowed it ; she placed herself before
“ the statue of the goddess, and prayed
“ that her sons Cleobis and Biton, by
“ whose dutiful behaviour all this ho-
“ nour was reflected upon her, might
“ share the happiest fate that Heaven
“ could grant to mortals. After this
“ supplication was offered, and the pu-
“ blic sacrifice concluded with the u-
“ sual repast ; the two young men laid
“ themselves down to rest in the temple:

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“ but

“ but they waked no more; their eyes
“ being fast folded in the sleep of death.
“ The Argives, revering their cha-
“ racters, erected statues for them at
“ Delphos; where distinguish’d piety
“ had the privilege of being consecrated
“ to fame.”

SOLON having produced this second example of human felicity, the King of Lydia seemed dissatisfied; and, in a fit of impatience, replied, “ My guest of
“ Athens, does then all the happiness of
“ our estate appear so despicable in thy
“ sight, as not to be thought equal to
“ what men enjoy in private life?”

To this the philosopher made answer in the following strain: “ By thee, O
“ King, I am required to give a judg-
“ ment of human life; I, who am per-
“ suaded, that, in all the destinies of
“ the gods concerning men, something
“ invidious and turbulent may be found.
“ Since, in any length of time, there
“ are many things that must be seen,
“ which one would never chuse to be-
“ hold;

“ hold ; and also many others to be en-
“ dured, that are equally unpleasant.
“ For, let me suppose the term of human
“ life placed at seventy years, which,
“ without including the intercalary
“ months, amounts to twenty five
“ thousand two hundred days ; and, if
“ to every other year a month be ad-
“ ded, (that the different reckonings
“ may coincide), the intercalated
“ months being thirty five, make up
“ a thousand and fifty days : now, in
“ all this number of days, which, in
“ seventy years, are thus computed to
“ be twenty six thousand two hundred
“ and fifty, not one of them is marked
“ with the same incidents as another ;
“ so much is man exposed to a diversity
“ of fortune ! To me, O Croesus, thou
“ indeed appearest to outshine all others
“ in princely wealth and grandeur ; but,
“ as to what concerns thee in the question
“ proposed, I cannot, without absurd
“ presumption, take upon me to deter-
“ mine, untill I shall hear how happily

“ life’s period is reached by thee. For
“ the wealthiest man is not to be deem-
“ ed happier than he who subsists mere-
“ ly from day to day, unless fortune
“ allow him, with equal prosperity, to
“ finish his last stage. Many live in
“ affluent circumstances that are not
“ happy, and many upon slender means
“ that are favoured by fate. The rich,
“ but unhappy man, hath the advan-
“ tage, only in two respects, over the
“ person to whom destiny is propitious;
“ but this last surpasses him in many.
“ The one is more able to gratify his
“ desires, and to bear any accidental
“ damage: but the other, unprovided
“ for the ravage of fortune, and the
“ waste of appetite, is exempted, by
“ his situation, from both these evils.
“ His poverty is also frequently com-
“ pensated by several additional advan-
“ tages; such as, a course of tranquillity,
“ of health and unshaken spirit,
“ together with an agreeable form of
“ body, and an offspring inheriting
“ these

“ these qualities. And if, to crown
“ all, a favourable end of life be ap-
“ pointed for him; he is that happy per-
“ son for whom thou art inquiring.
“ But, until death, none can claim a
“ higher title, than that of prosperous.
“ Since, for any individual to have eve-
“ ry ingredient of happiness united in his
“ person, must be impossible. As no
“ country is productive of all commo-
“ dities, but some are still wanting to
“ render its provision compleat, and yet
“ that is accounted the best which
“ hath the largest share; so no particu-
“ lar man can boast his ingrossing all
“ benefits: this one, and that is allot-
“ ted to him, whilst he is deprived of
“ some others. But he who continues
“ to enjoy the greatest number, and
“ then makes an agreeable exit out of
“ life; to him, O King, would I a-
“ scribe the distinguishing appellation.
“ For, in every just view of human
“ life, the point in which it terminates
“ ought to be comprehended; as the

“divinity hath rooted up many of
“those, who, for some time, stood in
“the full bloom of prosperity.”

IF we may believe what is said of the character of mankind, in the earliest ages of the world, the first heroes engaged in a task, of all others the most difficult, when they civilized the savage part of their species, and brought them under the restraint of laws. The philosophers, who came after them, undertook what was equal to this in difficulty; but a very distinct operation. They attempted to expunge from the minds of men their fond opinions of riches, power and honour, which were formed together with society, and seemed requisite to attach them more closely to it. The play of some of the keenest passions in the human breast was to be check'd: and men, in a state where outward distinctions must prevail, were to be taught an intire disregard of them. This was the aim to which philosophy aspired; presuming boldly that it should
succeed,

ſucceed, not amongſt the lower rank of mankind, but with thoſe who enjoyed property, and filled the higheſt ſtations. A remarkable inſtance of this, we ſee in Solon's diſcourſe to Croeſus: by which he endeavoured to impreſs the monarch with other ſentiments of his grandeur, than thoſe he had been accuſtomed with; and to lay before him a maimed image of his ſtate, ſtriped of all the glare that human vanity had thrown around it. Inſtead of imagining that his exalted condition gave him any advantage above others, or had any thing in it more conducive to man's happineſs; he was to behold it, as in many reſpects, outdone by the common lot of mankind. In making trials of this kind, philoſophers muſt have been hard put to it: and, we may believe, that, rather than be baffled, they would ſtick at no aſſeveration however extravagant; but propagate any opinion to help them out. Such was that emitted by Solon; when he inſiſted with the
King

King of Lydia, that, in high prosperity like his, not only the instability of fortune, but the malice of destiny, was to be apprehended.

HERODOTUS might, with propriety enough, ascribe this strain of argument to Solon; since it appears from several passages in Homer, that the principle upon which it proceeds was blended with the antient theology of the Greeks. Plutarch has indeed condemned those expressions of Πᾶν τό θεῖον φθονερόν καὶ ταρσάχως, as being full of gross impiety; and his authority may well be decisive upon this or any such point. But, besides the animadversion being found in a treatise, wrote professedly to censure Herodotus, it must be observed, that the sentiments of Plutarch, as a philosopher, are too refined not to deviate from many of the known maxims of pagan divinity; even from such as are avowed by their best poets and historians. In other parts of his works, Plutarch himself hath retailed the same doctrine,

ctrine, upon which Solon here expatiates; and introduces some of his favourite heroes reflecting upon the malignity of fortune, in terms not so offensive as these he arraigns in Herodotus, but which have the strongest tincture of the like enthusiasm: as an example to be cited presently will show.

It is also extremely natural to imagine that Solon, who had the strongest antipathy to all unequal distributions of power in civil life, should declare in favour of an opinion which might serve to overawe those who were successful in their usurpations of the common rights and liberties of mankind, and gloried in having multiplied the number of their dependents, and engrossed the largest share of dominion. Nothing could more readily provoke his indignation, than to behold men's hearts swelled with this sort of pride; which might dispose him to apply whatever opinion or argument appeared of greatest

est efficacy for confounding their vanity and arrogance.

HE was too quick-sighted not to perceive that the King of Lydia had contracted the distemper incident to prosperous fortune; and that it was daily growing with the poisonous food of adulation. He found himself pushed by Cræsus to join with others in echoing his applause: but he accounted it a more becoming office to raise a counterpoise to his pride by awaking his fears; and as a cure for the vain conceit of his felicity, to inculcate upon Cræsus the belief of an invidious disposition in the fates, and the doom of the gods against a constant and undisturbed prosperity to mortals.

HOWEVER hideous and fantastical this hypothesis may seem, it was not only propagated in antient times, but gained credit and had influence with men, whom, of all others, we should imagine the least susceptible of desponding impressions. Herodotus hath recorded

corded several instances of this ; one of which, both for it's singularity, and being the properest comment on Solon's doctrine, deserves to be inserted. It is a passage in the history of Polycrates tyrant of Samos ; who, having met with an amazing success and uninterrupted felicity in all his designs, had the following epistle sent to him, by his friend and ally Amasis King of Egypt.

Amasis writes this to Polycrates.

“ I am well-pleased to hear of the
“ success and prosperity of one with
“ whom I am united in the bonds of
“ friendship and hospitality. But your
“ prodigious good fortune I like not so
“ much ; considering what envy there
“ is in the supreme powers. For my
“ inclination would always be, even in
“ my most interesting affairs, to have a
“ vicissitude of good and bad fortune ;
“ and that this should accompany me
“ through

“ through life, rather than an invari-
“ able prosperity. Since I never
“ heard of one constantly successful,
“ who at the last could escape a signal
“ overthrow. Therefore let me ad-
“ vise you to take this course with your
“ fortune. Think what you put a real
“ value upon, the loss of which you
“ cannot sustain without the sincerest
“ concern. Let this be taken and cast
“ away, beyond the power of man to
“ recover it. If after this, your fortune
“ be not varied, but keep on at the
“ same pace; repeat the remedy I have
“ now suggested.”

POLYCRATES was not so flushed with his fortune as to condemn the advice : he resolved to comply with it. And, for this purpose, amongst a variety of valuable things belonging to him, he pitched upon a seal of emerald-stone, which had been cut for him and set in gold by Theodorus the famous Samian artist. Being sensible of excessive fondness for this rarity, he took it with him

him aboard a galley ; and, having ordered the mariners to put off from the island, in the view of all he threw it into the sea. Upon the fifth or sixth day after, the fishermen caught a fish of vast bulk ; and, for the novelty, brought it to the palace : when they dissected the creature there ; the seal was found in it's belly. The King of Samos, looking upon this accident as something supernatural, wrote an account of the whole affair to Amasis : who needed no other evidence of his being a person devoted to some dreadful stroke of fate. He even believed himself not safe, if he should be further concerned with Polycrates : and therefore he immediately dispatched a herald to Samos, and dissolved the league that subsisted between them.

WHETHER this story be considered as only traditional, or altogether fictitious ; we must allow it to be framed according to some standing opinion of the
E antients,

antients, with respect to any remarkable series of good fortune. To be satisfied about this; let us take an example or two, out of many, that are found in periods of history lying more in view; and in which there is less question, that authors relate facts deserving to be credited.

PHILIP King of Macedonia, who was accustomed to success in his enterprises, and knew well enough what was due to his prudence and valour, being astonished at a concurrence of several fortunate events that befel him, and under a dread of the envy of the gods; prayed to the goddess Nemesis, "That these so many obsequious services of fortune might be compensated by some slight calamity."

'Tis said of his son Alexander, headlong as he was, and ever defying fear in the face of danger, that, for a moment before he engaged at the battle of Issus, he found his usual presumption fail him; when he reflected that nothing but
what

what was rather intimidating and a proof of the mutability of fortune, could be inferred from all his former success.

ANOTHER instance is that of Paulus Æmilius, who conquered the Macedonians. This great commander, after his victory at Pydna, having got Perseus himself, together with his treasures and family, surrendered up to him; instead of shewing any joy at the sight of these indubitable pledges of his triumph, appeared to be damp'd in spirit, and for a while remained silent: then, addressing himself to those that stood around him, he bid them all "Take heed to the caprice of fortune, which ought never to be trusted; and, least of all, when, as at present, they saw it run with the greatest bias to one side:" adding, "That, on account of the rotation observable in human affairs, by which men were exalted and cast down in their turns; it became them never to be transported with success, but always to carry their

E 2. "thoughts

“ thoughts on to what was future: con-
 “ sidering upon whom the invidious
 “ will of destiny, in the end, would
 “ fix, and exact the acquittal due for
 “ favours already bestowed.”

THE Roman general did not only inculcate this opinion of a wayward fate upon the younger officers, his disciples in the art of war; to prevent their giving way to a giddy agitation, and ecstasy of mind, in the day of victory. He is represented, both by Livy* and Plutarch†, as retaining, himself, the constant impression of it: so that he declared it impossible for him to contemplate the many fortunate circumstances attending his rapid conquest of Macedonia, without a certain terror and suspicion; that so bright a scene could never terminate but in some dismal and gloomy event. When, accordingly, the death of one of his sons preceded his triumph, and that of the other fol-

* Lib. 45.

† In vita Æmilii.

lowed soon after it ; he delivered, in a speech to the Roman people, his sentiments of this severe stroke from fortune : At which, says Plutarch, all men were shock'd ; as the felicity of one so deserving could be an invidious sight to none of the good : unless it were so, to some dæmon whose province it is to reduce exorbitant good fortune, nearer to the common measure, by giving it a dash of human calamity.

ÆMILIUS spoke to this purpose :
 “ After having,” said he, “ compleated,
 “ in fifteen days, an expedition, which
 “ the generals before me had protracted
 “ for several years, I had reason to ex-
 “ pect some back-blow from fortune ;
 “ and that, as is usual in such a high
 “ tide of success, I should be made sen-
 “ sible of her tendency to a revolution.
 “ When no such thing happened to me,
 “ or to the army at land, I dreaded it
 “ upon putting to sea, with all the spoils
 “ of a vanquished empire ; for, undi-
 “ mayed, as I always was, at any human
 E 3 “ power,

“ power, I could not avoid standing in
“ awe of that variable and perfidious
“ divinity. And now the never fail-
“ ing reverse of fortune, which I rea-
“ dily anticipated in my mind, is cast
“ up: she hath shewn you, at the same
“ time, the captive Perseus with all his
“ children about him, and Æmilius in
“ triumph, without any one of those
“ being left alive who should have
“ transmitted his name and family to
“ posterity.”

WHEN we reflect on the natural tendency of prosperous fortune to elevate the human mind, and to inspire it with alacrity and confidence; the anxiety and fear, with which Æmilius declares his spirit laboured after the noblest and happiest atchievement, may, indeed, appear very strange and incredible: but the power of opinion will often prevail over the impulse of nature. And it ought to be considered, upon the antient notion of every individual having his lot with its necessary mixture of
good

good and evil, how directly men are led to this conclusion ; that, when a remarkable portion of the good is come, the ill must inevitably follow. Xenophon supposes the mind of his hero to have been thus affected ; even tho' he feigns his life one continued scene of good fortune : and therefore, in his last reflexions, Cyrus says, " While every
 " undertaking succeeded to his wishes,
 " yet the fear of some disaster, which
 " might ensue, always adhered to him ;
 " and controuled, not only the excesses of pride, but all intemperate joy."

IN all these instances, we see the effect of that enthusiastic opinion which Solon avowed, before the King of Lydia, to be the result of his observations on human life ; and how it operated as an antidote against the presumption and arrogance of those, who, from their circumstances, were apt to be intoxicated with prosperity's delusive charms. A strange specific it was ! And yet, it may be questioned, Whether philosophers

phers are most to blame for converting any such false opinion into an argument for equitable behaviour, or for attempting to darken and perplex the most rational and obvious principles of moral conduct. They have done both, in every age, surely, not much to the credit of philosophy.

BUT, whatever Solon expected to ensue, from the warmth of his discourse, and the force of his argument, the King of Lydia remained unper-suaded; and thought he gave, in both, a very rough copy of his character for wisdom. His lowring ideas of life were so far from being relished at the court of Sardis, that the discovery of them was sufficient to render him the object of ridicule and contempt. *Not to value present good, from an apprehension of future ill*; was such a position as every ludicrous wit could easily expose. While others, in a graver manner, found fault with Solon, as wanting that polish and complaisance which is necessary for those

those who approach the great. For several of the Grecian wits, who frequented *Cræsus's* court, had adopted a kind of *local* philosophy, by which they took cognizance of the *atmosphere* wherein they dwelt; and, according to its apparent density or lightness, they judged whether the spirit of philosophizing should be raised or let fall. Among these was *Æsop*, supposed to be the author of the fables; who, from his condition in life, having early learned something of that science, shewed himself now to be an able proficient. Upon his observing *Solon* so ill-versed in it, and that his reputation was fast declining, he took occasion to admonish him of what consequence this accomplishment proved: "Either," said he, (in a jingling phrase) "let our address be soothing, or not at all, to kings." "Nay rather," *Solon* replied, "let it never be, or be for their good."

IN this manner was one, who infused spirit and vigour into a republic by his laws,

laws, and knew how to form the harmony of all the parts of the most refined constitution, supposed to be ignorant of the beaten tract of a court, and how to suit himself to it's prevailing taste for vanity. Therefore, as when a comet comes in sight, and, by its irregular and excentric motion, perplexes the systems of the learned; so the Athenian Sage was beheld, for a season, at Sardis, and quickly left his observers there to form what conjectures they pleased about his surprizing appearance.

THE

THE
HISTORY OF CROESUS.

PART II.

SECT. I.

A dream; and what followed upon it.

WHEN men are disposed to form an estimate of their happiness, and frequently to contemplate all that may be thought agreeable and advantageous in their lot; they happen, sometimes, to be informed of their wants and weaknesses, as well as of their ability and power. Tho' they chuse to stifle the discovery, and affect to despise those who entertain any suspicion of it; yet they cannot always wear the mask: but, being left to themselves, without a provocation to their vanity, they come unwarily to betray their secret sentiments.

SOME

SOME such theory as this might pass for a solution of what seems otherwise difficult to be accounted for, in relation to Cræsus; who now began to shew himself a voluntary proselyte to the doctrine of Solon. But our author takes it much higher, and considers it as a vindictive proceeding, on the part of the gods. He supposed that men, in the greatest exaltation of power, were often singled out to bear the scourge of Heaven; * as the Thunderer launched his bolts against the stateliest trees of the wood, and the loftiest spires. Believing that Cræsus might have incurred the displeasure of the gods, by presuming so much on his fortune, and boasting his being fixed singly upon the summit of felicity; he refers to the hand of indignant Heaven, not only the adverse blow he received, but also the presage of it which now alarmed him.

IT must however be owned that his apprehension of ill, arose from a quarter
where

* Artabanus's speech to Xerxes, Lib. 7. par. 10.

where Fortune had rather proved unkind to him, than bestowed any uncommon pledge of her favour : though it was such a one as he certainly esteemed very dear and valuable. The fact was, he had for sometime wanted offspring ; and, according to Xenophon, he had besought the gods, with much importunity and many presents, to grant him the blessing of children. He obtained the wished-for joy ; and had two sons born to him : but one of them unfortunately proved a mute. The other, named Atys, was endowed with every desirable quality. A genius ripening with every manly virtue characterized him above all his equals in years ; and doubly endeared him to his father. In Atys he found what in a great measure solaced his grief for the other's incurable infirmity.

BUT if Croesus had a sensibility of heart to relish the parental joys, and daily perceived their sweet diffusion in

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his

his mind ; we need not wonder that he did not easily repress anxiety, which grows up in a close connection with the sonder passions. Here the King of Lydia was altogether the man, and the father. He could not, as other persons might, coolly reflect upon the merit of Atys, and make a general note of his value. The idea of a son so amiable, occupied all his affections ; and sharpened them into care and solicitude for his safety. This too delicate sensation might yet have passed unheeded by all ; and, perhaps, seem'd to Crœsus as nothing unusual : had it not been for a particular circumstance that discovered the excess to which it went.

As the King, one night, was laid asleep, a visionary scene appeared ; and by some form of fancy's imagery, it was shewed him, that “ his son Atys
“ should die by the stroke of a weapon pointed with steel.” Being awaked, he began to reason with himself,

self, and endeavour to banish the disturbing impression of the dream from his mind: but it resisted all the power of his reflexion; and, having already brooded upon his fancy, it now cast it's shadow over all his thoughts. He submitted to a fear which he was not able to controul; and all he could do, for the present, was only to contrive an expedient, by which he might avert or mitigate the dreaded mischief.

THE opinion of the supernatural and divine origin of dreams; as it was very early and universally prevalent in the world, may, truly, be thought to have augmented Cræsus's consternation. But there is no more reason, than necessity, for ascribing all that he felt to the influence of principle. Dreams are a phænomenon, which hath a natural and often a very wonderful effect upon the mind; not only exciting a momentary impulse, but creating a tremor and agitation of the spirits, which does not presently subside. When the

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impression

impression has been very lively, it frequently recurs upon the waking thoughts: and if the image presented be relative to any event, about which the mind is deeply concerned, it is then most readily apprehended to be real and genuine; and, as such, the mind lays hold of it, in order to determine it's conjectures of futurity, whether they proceed from hope or from fear. In this way, dreams may be imprinted upon men's minds, so as to induce a kind of belief; and have the same efficacy, in certain actions, as any very well-grounded principle: though there be no system, nor positive opinion embraced, concerning their cause. The confusion and fallacy which runs through the whole appearance of dreams, and which the considerate part of mankind must have been ever aware of, hath not prevented the wise themselves from taking up, upon occasions, very strong impressions from them. Croesus found it unavoidable.

Why?

Why? The representation he had was too affecting to be slighted: all the fears of a father arose to support the credibility of the dismal portent. To think that Atys, his sole hope, might thus suddenly be snatched away, and to have the melancholy thought so strangely obtruded upon him, was more than sufficient to prompt his apprehension, and put him upon studying more attentively his son's preservation from all danger.

S E C T. II.

ATYS's marriage was now fixed upon by Croesus, as a necessary lenitive for his uneasiness; and not, as otherways it might have been, for an enlargement of his joy. The match was advised and concluded, agreeable to the King's desire, without loss of time. Nor was this all that ever-musing fear suggested. Particular care was taken

not to expose Atys to the mischances of war : He was not allowed, as formerly, to command the Lydians in battle ; and, as if death lurked for him in every weapon, the darts and spears, which hung in the public galleries, looked dangerous, and were removed into private rooms.

IN the time of celebrating the nuptials, Cræsus had occasion to shew his tenderness for the distressed, and his readiness to help them. There came a person, and took sanctuary in the palace at Sardis, who was known immediately to be a Phrygian of high rank, but to be undone in his fortune by some unlucky act of his own. Altho' he had not declared the special nature of his crime, religious usage permitted his requesting to be cleansed from the stain of blood which he had shed. This institution was common to several different countries, with some variation as to the rituals of it ; but in Lydia, and in Greece, almost the very same form was

was observed. Croesus, moved with the intreaties of the dejected stranger, and reckoning so generous a deed not unsuitable to the festivity of his court, condescended, himself, to perform the expiation. Which being done, with the usual ceremonies, he inquired of the person, Who he was, and from what part of Phrygia he came, and in whose blood he had dipped his hands? "I am," replied he, "the son of Midas, Gordius's heir; my name is Adrastus. For having been the unwilling cause of my brother's death, thou beholdest me here, expelled by my father, and bereft of all things." The King assured him, That the mention of his family was enough to conciliate his friendship; that he should find no want of any thing, if he staid in his household; and, provided he could render himself easy under his misfortune, that an amends might be made for the losses with which it was attended.

BUT

BUT the measures Cræsus proposed to observe for the security of his son, were not at all consistent with the known behaviour and dauntless spirit of Atys: And the difficulty of subjecting him to the restraint of fear, soon appeared. In that part of Mysia where mount Olympus is situated, a huge wild boar ravaged the country, and, favoured by the haunts of the mountain, baffled all the attempts of the Mysians to destroy him. At length, tired of their fruitless toil, they agreed to send messengers and acquaint Cræsus in what manner their fields were ruined; and to intreat him to allow his son to come, with a band of the most expert youths, and the dogs bred to the chase, and help them to rid their territory of the rapacious monster. When the report was made by the messengers to the King, he was startled at the request of his son's presence; and bid them not expect it: saying, "That, being so lately espoused, he had nothing to do
" in

“ in such affairs ; but that a choice bo-
“ dy of Lydians should attend them,
“ with all the hunting train ; and that
“ he would strictly charge his people to
“ make the utmost dispatch in driving
“ the wild beast out of their bounds.”

The Myfian deputies were not quite
fatisfied with this return : and it dis-
turbed Atys not a little, when he
heard the part of it which related to
himself. The King’s refusing to let
him go, confirmed the fufpicions he had
taken up before of a defign to lay him
afide from action. He could not be
eafy, until he came to expofultate the
matter with the King ; which he did in
thele terms : “ Formerly, O father, I
“ was free to engage in any laudable
“ and worthy atchievement, and might
“ procure the praife of valour, either
“ in battle or in rousing the favage
“ prey ; but now, from both thele ways
“ to fame, I am excluded : while yet
“ none hath told me of any failure in
“ my alacrity or my courage. What a
“ defpicable

“ despicable appearance shall I now
“ make in public ! What a shadow of
“ a man shall I seem to the citizens !
“ And will not even my new spouse
“ disdain her having matched with such
“ a husband ? Either then permit me
“ to take the field, or let me be con-
“ vinced that it is better for me to be
“ under other directions.” If Croesus
was before mysterious, and had entered
into any resolution of keeping the secret
of his conduct, this speech from Atys
immediately melted it down, and con-
strained him to a plain discovery ; which
he made in these words : “ It is not
“ that I have seen any thing pusillani-
“ mous, or at all distasteful in thee,
“ my son, which makes me act in the
“ way I do ; but a phantom having ap-
“ peared to me in sleep, pronounced the
“ date of thy life to be short, and that
“ thou shouldst fall by a weapon point-
“ ed with steel. On account of this
“ vision, I hastened thy marriage, and
“ do not now employ thee in any en-
“ terprize ;

“terprize; intending, if any care of
“mine can be effectual, to steal thee
“away from fate as long as I live, since
“thou art the only son I have: for I
“reckon not upon him who wants the
“faculty of hearing.”

“It was (answered Atys) most allowable in thee, my father, after
“thou hadst seen such a vision, to be
“attentive to my safety; but, it seems
“also fit, on my part, to take notice
“of what I think overlooked by thee
“about the dream. Thou sayst, the
“phantom denounced my death by a
“weapon pointed with steel: now,
“what hands to throw, or what steel
“to pierce, are to be feared from a wild
“boar? Had it been said, I should die
“by a tusk, or the like, thou wert in
“the right to prevent my danger; but,
“a weapon’s point being the word,
“and since I am not, in this case, to
“encounter with men, thou mayst
“grant me leave to go.”

CROESUS,

CROESUS, like one to whom the very gloominess of fear makes welcome any abatement of it, allowed himself to be persuaded by Atys: telling him, that, as there was reason to be of his opinion concerning the dream, he would not insist further against his departure.

S E C T. III.

THE King of Lydia having yielded to his son's importunity, as well as to the quaintness of his argument, was not, however, so secure, but that he thought some precaution still necessary. He determined to send along with Atys, one whom he could entrust with the care of his person; and believing none more proper than Adrastus the Phrygian, he called for him, and gave him the charge in the following manner: "Adrastus, unfortunate as thou hast
" been, (not that I have cause to re-
" pent,

“pent, or mean to upbraid thee): my
“hands have cleansed thee; I have
“sheltered, and allowed thee a liberal
“maintenance, in my house. Thou
“mayst now, as becomes thee, render
“the offices of kindness mutual: I need
“thee, to be a safe-guard to my son,
“who is preparing to set out with a
“hunting party; which may happen to
“be attacked and annoyed by the
“sculking Banditti. Besides, it is fit,
“that thou shouldst go where thy a-
“ctions may shine forth: it is worthy
“of thy family; and thou art in the
“prime of thy strength.” Adrastus
replied, “Otherwise, O King, I should
“not have presumed to take part in
“any action. One, so ill-fated as I,
“cannot, with decency, put himself
“upon a footing with other youth; nor
“ought to shew a forwardness to do so.
“I have been at pains to check the
“propensity in myself. But since it is
“so that thou requirest it of me;

G

“Thou

“Thou whose kindness I am bound in
“duty to acknowledge; I readily com-
“ply. As for thy son, of whom thou
“givest me the custody; believe, that
“his keeper’s fidelity will warrant his
“safe return.”

Soon after this, every thing being in readiness; they departed for Mysia: having in their train, a select band of youth, with the dogs fit for hunting the prey. When they arrived at mount Olympus, they ranged about in search of the boar; and having discovered him, they spread themselves all around, so as to keep him inclosed; and then began, on every side, to ply their weapons. Here Adrastus threw his javelin; which, being unhappily aimed, struck Atys with all it’s force. He felt the deadly wound; and soon confirmed the augury of the dream. The news of the dire event was presently carried to Sardis; and the King was told by what fatal accident his son had perished.

THE

THE heart of Croesus was rent with violent sorrow; and the thought of having his son killed, by the very man whom he had cleansed from slaughter, inflamed it the more. Inward anguish heated itself into indignation at his fate, and he uttered the bitterest complaints. He invoked Jupiter, to whom the rite of purification was sacred, that he might witness the wrongs he suffered at the hand of one so solemnly admitted to be his guest. He invoked him, as the guardian-god of hospitality; because, having dispensed it's bounties to a man, he had unwarily fostered the murderer of his son: and also as the god of social confidence; since he, who was entrusted by him, as a friendly companion, had proved the worst of enemies.

AND now the Lydians appeared, bearing the bloody corps of Atys. At some distance behind them, came on the murderer. Having stopped, opposite

to where the dead body was laid down, he made a surrender of himself to Cræsus; and, with hands outstretched, required that he should slay him as a victim to the dead: mentioning his former fatal action; and declaring, that now, having destroyed his purifier, he was utterly unworthy to live. Cræsus heard him; and, deeply affected as he was with his own grief, he even pitied Adrastus. “I have (said he) full satisfaction of thee, my guest, since thou
“adjudgest thyself to death. But thou
“art not the blameable cause of this
“calamity, by being the involuntary
“instrument of it. Some one or other
“of the gods it is, by whom I was
“even fore-warned of what should
“come to pass.”

CROESUS, thus resigning all unavailing rage against the destroyer of his son, thought only of performing, with all decent rites, the last mournful office of his burial. But Adrastus, Midas's unhappy son, whose hands a brother's blood

blood and a benefactor's had stained, when all the rest retired from Atys's tomb, waited there: and, deeming himself more consummately wretched than any mortal besides, made an end of his life.

THE father's grief abated not; but seemed rather to increase, the more he reflected upon his irreparable loss. Neither the desire of pleasure nor of glory could render it supportable. But time gradually wears away the edge of the most rankling sorrow. When two years were expired, Cræsus, at length, began to recover his wonted spirit.

WHAT contributed the more to this, was a sudden revolution in Media: its Emperor Astyages being defeated by Cyrus, son of Cambyfes, and Prince of Persia; which had brought that monarchy under his subjection. This vast accession of power to Persia was formidable, and the King of Lydia had reason to be jealous of it. He thought it not enough to be upon his guard, but

was anxious to obviate the danger, by striking a blow, before the Persians had throughly established their new-got empire. Thus did Cræsus readily relish a scheme of action, and wanted to make the boldest push for renown; as if his favourite passion, for a while stifled by grief, revived now more powerfully than ever in his mind.

BUT, whether the late shock of fortune had damp'd a little his usual intrepidity, or the danger of the enterprize rendered him diffident; the King of Lydia did not chuse to engage in it, without some better warrant for success than the common chance of war. He determined to search out the will of the gods, and learn how far his present design was favoured by them. To be fully satisfied in this, he believed it necessary to apply to the shrines and altars of many other deities, besides those of his country; which, as far as appears, had

had never before been done by him *, except in the case of his brother Pantaleon: and then it was only by vowing to several of the gods a considerable offering, if he should vanquish this pretender to his throne. For Alyattes had married two wives: the one a Carian, who was Cræsus's mother; the other an Ionian, who was Pantaleon's. Cræsus was left heir of the kingdom by his father; but Pantaleon formed a design to assume the sovereignty, and found a party to support him in it. When he was overthrown, the spoils of his adherents were devoted to the service of the gods.

THE

* Our historian takes no notice of his application to Apollo for want of offspring, mentioned above from Xenophon.

THE
HISTORY OF CROESUS.

PART III.

CHAP. I.

*The origin of oracles. The credit of those
that Cræsus consulted. Divination, how
proved. Cræsus's doubtful question.*

THE fond desire which mankind
have to know future events will
account, if not for the commencement
of oracles, at least, for the ready vene-
ration and general credit which they
obtained. Whatever made shew of
gratifying a passion so irresistible, would
not want faith. The pretensions to a
supernatural knowledge would be easily
admitted by men, in things which they
wished

wished mightily to understand, and despaired of finding out in a natural way.

BUT, if it be further inquired, Upon what precise footing this mysterious scene turned; whether the craftiness of imposture, or the phrenzy of enthusiasm, or dæmonism itself, lay at the bottom of it? the decision is perhaps plainer than the proof. In a question of this kind, the mind may come to a just determination, without unrevelling every difficulty. There is indeed some reason to suspect, that the first of these opinions hath been carried too great a length. Mankind, when rude and unexperienced, were certainly as apt to be themselves the dupes of delusion, as to delude others. Even the priests could not at once throw off religious fear and natural prejudices: it behoved to be done by degrees, when the enthusiastic spirit cooled; by its transmission from one set of men to another, by some rather affecting than feeling its influence, and by the trials of such
to

to supply what they wanted of spiritual ecstacy by deceit.

IN Ægypt, where the people's proneness to all manner of superstition swelled the number of the priestly tribe, the craft would quickly take place. Other countries, which, like Greece, were furnished with gods from thence, must be allowed a proportionable time to learn it. For strangers, who came to get instruction from the Ægyptian priests, were not admitted to the knowledge of all their mysteries; and the latter, being so well provided at home, had no occasion to disperse themselves into foreign parts. * The priestess of Ægypt, to whom the Grecians owed the founding of their oldest oracle, appears to have been forced away by some Phœnician traders; and, when she began to act in her profession, was much at a loss to make herself understood for want of the Greek tongue.

BUT

* Her. Lib. 2. parg. 54.

BUT the Greeks, having begun upon some borrowed elements, came at length to rival their teachers in the prophetic science. Their genius for invention shone forth in Homer and Hesiod, the two great masters of fable and allegory ; * who improved and fixed the Grecian theogony ; gave titles to all the gods, expressive of their distinct powers and characters ; described the peculiar honours and worship due to each of them ; and delineated their very images and forms. Hence the study of poetry, being familiar to their priests, was cultivated for the service of religion ; which rendered the altars of the gods venerable, and their oracles the most renowned in the heathen world.

APOLLO, the god of science and poetry, having his chief residence upon the hill of Parnassus, emitted his predictions with such clearness and harmony, as was done no where besides. His oracle at Delphos was more admired and consulted

* Ibid. par. 53.

consulted than any other in Greece: even that of Jupiter at Dodona, with all it's antiquity, came far short of it in fame. To the same god two other oracles belonged; which, in Crœsus's time, had their share of reputation and wealth: the one was established at Abæ, a town of the Phocians, in the neighbourhood of Delphos; and the other among the Branchidæ, a people in Asia, who possessed part of the Melesian territory, above the sea port of Panormus. Both were of a pretty old standing, especially the latter; * in the veneration of which, the Ionian and Æolian nations joined.

BOEOTIA too eminently professed the mystery of divination. Two old Grecian prophets, Amphiaraus and Trophonius, had each a celebrated oracle in this country. The first revealed the secrets of fate to dreamers in his sanctuary; the other permitted none to enter his cloudy cave, and penetrate

H through

* Her. Lib. 1. par. 156.

through the gloom of it into futurity, * without many preliminary rites and formalities: which shewed, that the Bœotians, in their taste and stile of prophecy, differed from the rest of Greece, as they did in other arts.

LYBIA had one single oracle; that of Jupiter-Hammon, which was the boast of Africa. It had undoubtedly been an offspring from Ægypt; and, from what is alledged by Herodotus, may be reckoned of the same antiquity with that of the Dodonæan Jupiter in Greece. † The wild figure and composition of the god, his manner of making responses by nods and signs, and all his fantastical gestures, were every way becoming an idol of true African growth.

These several oracles were the standards for divination, and comprehended whatever could be found of it in the three great continents. When the
King

* Pausanias Bœoticis.

† Quint. Cur. Lib. 4. parg. 30.
Diod. Sic. 17.

King of Lydia became solicitous about the event of his new-formed scheme, the war with Cyrus ; he proposed advising with such a number of them, that he might not fail of making the discovery he so earnestly desired, and that he might do it with the greater certainty. He had, as yet, no such particular attachment to any one of them, as to follow it implicitly ; and he distrusted what common fame reported concerning them all. How to chuse amidst so many rivals in prophecy, seemed difficult ; and he resolved to try which of them most deserved his confidence.

THE credit of divination stood upon received opinion, upon testimony, and a series of facts supposed to be true. Men, at first, sought no other probation but what arose from several matters of fact being either known or attested to them. The labouring a proof by metaphysical reasoning, and working it up into a system, was the refinement of philosophers,

phers, when their disputes multiplied in a later age. The specious argument was then devised: * If there is divination, there must be gods; and if there are gods, there must be divination. But, where the force of this abstracted reasoning was not perceived, or not suited to the genius of the times, men grounded their belief of divination upon some more obvious principle. Such as were less credulous and more inquisitive than others, considering it as a question of fact, to be decided by experience, thought themselves at freedom to make a narrower examination; and even to require some positive testimony of the alledged power of prediction. Such a proof, as history tells us, did one of Rome's first kings demand of an Augur, for verifying his art. And, in this manner of previous experiment, did Croesus now proceed with the oracles to which he applied.

FOR

* Cicero de Divin. Lib. 1.

FOR this purpose, he made choice of so many Lydians to go to the different oracles. After leaving Sardis, they had orders to reckon to a set day; before which, it was supposed, that all of them would be arrived at the place intended. The question each of them had then to propose to the oracle he consulted, was; *What is Cræsus, son of Alyattes, King of Lydia, doing at present?* What ever response was made, he required to be taken down in writing, and so brought back to him.

C H A P. II.

The report from the oracles. Cræsus satisfied with Apollo's response. The present sent by him to Delphos.

NO historian can shew more zealous care, than Herodotus hath done, in recording whatever might bear witness to the veracity, and demonstrate the unlimited knowledge of the oracles of

the gods. In such high estimation, he believed, no doubt, all that class of them deserved to stand, which was now canvassed by Croesus. But, however willing he might be to vouch for them upon this occasion, it could not be done; since fame spoke particularly of none of their answers, except that which was given by the god of Delphos. What came afterwards to be said of the other deities, resigning all skill in prophecy to the Delphian Apollo, seemed truly to be the case at present. The responses were always delivered by the Pythioness with readiness and fluency. And no sooner had the Lydians presented themselves in the temple, and declared what they were commanded to inquire, than the sacred virgin was heard, with a distinct voice, expressing herself, in hexameters, to this effect :

*The sands I number, the wide ocean's bounds
By me are known; all secrets so disclos'd,
I hear the silent, and the dumb explore :*

And

*And now I smell the odour shed around,
Which from a lamb and tortoise fire exhales,
And all of brass the boiling vase is form'd.*

THE Lydian deputies returned with a written copy of this response to the King. It was read, together with the reports from the other oracles, and approved by Cræsus as a just divination. He could not forbear adoring the god, whose unerring knowledge was manifest in it; and thought he had reason to conclude, that the oracle at Delphos was the only one, amongst them all, worthy of credit: since, upon examining the answers transmitted from the rest, there appeared nothing but what was vague and erroneous. The artifice of Cræsus had certainly disconcerted them; as he threw *in* a question, out of the common run, which could not, like most others they were used to, be well answered by an evasion, a dark hint, or a distant conjecture. But the penetration of Apollo proved
equal

equal to the trial; and, his response was decisive: notwithstanding the King of Lydia was persuaded, that, when he betook himself to such an action, as the boiling a lamb and tortoise together in a brazen kettle; *what he did* would be the most ambiguous point imaginable to determine.

THUS far did Cræsus attempt the investigation of the oracles; induced to it, not only by curiosity, but by some degree of doubt, with regard to them. Having rested his inquiry upon one plain point, and received the conviction he sought; neither his own sincerity, nor the temper of the age he lived in, which set bounds to presumption, permitted his insisting farther. He therefore considered himself, not only as henceforth bound to confide in the Delphian god, but to pay him the most particular acknowledgments; such as might witness the cause of attachment he had to his divinity above others,

thers, and demonstrate how highly his favour ought to be valued.

AND now become a declared votary to Apollo, Cræsus proceeded to deeds of religion proportioned to his recent zeal, the natural liberality of his heart, and the full stores of his wealth. In nothing he endured to be outdone; and, where a religious impulse blended itself with a sense of grandeur, it behoved him to surpass, in munificence, any who ever adored his favourite deity. How costly and splendid his offerings were, and from what an incredible fund of accumulated riches, amongst the Lydians, they must have flowed, will appear from the detail which Herodotus hath given of this profusive donation, which art strove to heighten in value and embellishment. His account is from eye-sight of the remainder of these gifts in his time, and so precise as to carry every mark of *authenticity*.

FIRST of all, he appointed a sacrifice of three thousand oxen from the choicest

choicest herds; and, having formed a vast pile of the richest furniture, of couches wrought with gold and silver, of golden cups, purple robes and vestments, he burnt the whole. The Lydians were excited to imitate his example; all of them, who were provided with these pompous appendages of luxury. Antient custom and religious ceremony concurred with the injunction of the King; that the wealthier sort might honour his royal oblation, and render it the more grand and magnificent.

THIS done, he again dissolved the infinite mass of precious metal, and had it formed into tiles of a different size. The longest measured six palms, or a cubit; the shortest, half of this dimension; and all of them, a sixth part of it in thickness. They amounted to eighteen in number: four of them, which were gold of the finest carrat, weighed two talents and a half a-piece; and all the rest, being from the alloy of a pal-
ler

ler colour, were half a talent lighter. He made, at the same time, a lion in gold all refined, weighing ten talents; which, having been placed over the tiles, fell off from them, when the temple of Delphos was burnt; and, being taken up, was afterwards deposited in the treasury of Corinth, where it was to be seen in Herodotus's time, having lost three talents of its weight by the fire.

WHEN these presents were prepared, Cræsus directed several others to be sent along with them; particularly, two vast basons, a gold and silver one: the first stood on the right, and the latter on the left side of the entry into the temple of Delphos. They too were removed at the time of the fire. That of gold was taken into the treasury of the Clazomænians, and its weight found to be eight talents and a half, and twelve minæ. The silver one, which was placed by a corner of the porch of the temple, could contain six hundred
amphoras,

amphoras, and used to be filled with wine at the solemn feast of the *Theophany*. It was said by the Delphians to have been framed by Theodorus the Samian; the mechanism being such as became some very masterly hand. There were also four silver casks, which came to be lodged in the Corinthian treasury, and a cistern of gold and another of silver; the first being falsely inscribed, *A gift from the Lacedæmonians*. The Delphian's name, who forged this piece of flattery for the people of Sparta, was known to Herodotus; but he chused not to publish it. The Lacedæmonians had indeed no right to claim either of the cisterns; their gift being only the additional image of a boy, whose hands discharged the water from them. Many more presents of smaller value did Croesus now bestow: such were several silver dishes cast in circular molds; a woman's effigy in gold, three cubits long, whom the Delphians reported to be Croesus's pastry-cook; and some
suits

suits of jewels for the neck, with girdles which had been part of dress to the Lydian Queen.

SUCH was the King of Lydia's liberal offering to the god of Delphos; which well might make his name for riches pass into a proverb with the Grecians. The learned may disagree in calculating the *sum total* of gold and silver, and the curious be at a loss to discover the source of all this wealth: but in Greece they could run into no mistake about the first of these points; for some generations at least, when all who pleased had access to inform themselves, upon the spot, as to every particular. When Xerxes invaded Greece, sixty years after this treasure came into it, and hoped the plunder of the temples, it is said *, that he had lists, presented to him by several persons, of the rich gifts hoarded up at Delphos, especially of those transmitted thither by

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Cræsus;

* Her. lib. 8. par. 35.

Crœsus ; and knew the sum of them, as well as what *specie* he had left at home.

IT happened well for the interest of the Delphian god, that the other oracles were found erroneous in their responses. But it might seem an affected omission, should no notice be taken of what our historian says in behalf of Amphiaraus and his oracle ; which, from general report, was also believed to have hit the question proposed. As Crœsus is said to have known what character for virtue this old Diviner had, and what a piteous fate befel him, he might be disposed to the most favourable acceptance of the answer from him : for Amphiaraus being importuned to attend the war, which Adrastus King of Argos waged with Thebes ; his skill in divination kept him from engaging in it, and shewed his doom to be otherways inevitable. While he endeavoured to shun the danger by a retreat, his wife Eriphyle took the bribe of a golden chain, to discover the place where he lay concealed.

ceased. Disdaining then any further evasion, he went to Thebes, where he was swallowed up with his chariot and horses in the earth; and, by so sudden and astonishing a death, passed for a martyr to the truth of his art. Cræsus, upon this occasion, gave him the respect due to a prophet and a hero; tho' the gifts allotted him shewed that he was not put in the balance with Apollo. They consisted of these pieces of armour: a shield all of gold, a massy spear-head with a shaft, and two darts of the same metal, which remained, in Herodotus's time, laid up at Thebes in the temple of Apollo Ismenius.

C H A P. III.

The question proposed to the oracles about the Persian war. Cræsus's further bounty to Apollo. The story of Alcmaeon. His joy in the oracle's answer.

WHEN Cræsus thought of scanning the oracles, and procuring some more direct document of their prescience than what the bold pretensions of so many afforded; his private satisfaction was not the chief object he had in view: he chose it as a means which might be rendered subservient to ambition. Having now, as he reckoned, made a more judicious discovery than others had done, as to the oracle ablest to give counsel, and found the god fittest to guide his designs; he did not spare his wealth, but freely bestowed it, where such perfect direction was to be obtained.

THE Lydians, appointed by the King to convey his donative to the shrines of
of

of Apollo and Amphiaraus, had instruction to state the main question to their oracles, for the sake of which alone the first was proposed. It was done in these respectful terms: "Crœsus, King
"of the Lydians and other nations,
"persuaded that yours are the only true
"oracles with which mankind are favoured, hath sent these gifts merited
"by such superior wisdom; and now
"he desires to be informed, whether
"he should enter into a war with the
"Persians; and, in case it be advisable, if he ought to take the assistance of any confederate." Both the oracles agreed in the same response, "That, if Crœsus made war upon the
"Persians, he should overturn a mighty
"empire." And they advised him to form an alliance with the most powerful of the Grecian states. This answer, even without the gloss of flattering hope, appeared sufficiently plain and favourable. Crœsus, unsuspicious, dream'd of no verbal ambiguity; but,

taking the words in the obvious sense they had with respect to his question, believed that Apollo gave his sanction expressly for the Persian war, and assured him of all desirable success. As a testimony how much he relished this answer from the god, he again sent to Delphos; and, having learn'd what number of inhabitants belonged to it, presented every man with two *staters* in gold. This, added to the account of his former generosity, drew from them this instance of acknowledgment: To Cræsus and the Lydians, they allowed the privilege of consulting the oracle preferable to all others, of having their *dispatches* sent off the soonest, and of the foremost seats in public; and that any of the Lydians who pleased might be enfranchized at Delphos for ever.

MANY instances shewed that the value which Cræsus had for his gold was far inferior to that which he put upon many other objects; and that he employed it in the prosecution of his designs,

signs, rather from observing the unquenchable thirst of men after it, than any sense of it's power over his own heart. His manner of rewarding Alcmaeon seemed to reproach the shameless avarice he had seen in many other characters. This man was the son of Megacles an Athenian of some rank; but the fortune of the family took its rise from the following circumstance. * When Cræsus first sent his deputies to Delphos, Alcmaeon had assisted them in addressing the oracle, and entertained them at his house; which they having reported upon their return, he was sent for by the King to Sardis. Upon his coming thither, he had an offer made him of as much gold as he could carry, at once, about his person. Alcmaeon took care to equip himself so that he might make the most of this boon: having put on a coat of the largest form with a lap folding very deep, and being provided with the widest

* Her. lib. 6. par. 125.

deft buskins he could find, in this dress they conducted him into the treasury; where, first falling down upon a heap of the shining metal, he filled his capacious shoes; then the whole circumference of his robe: he next proceeded to twist part into his hair, and to cram some more into his mouth: and so fet out, hardly able to drag his buskins after him, and shewing any thing rather than the figure of a man; his cheeks being swollen to such a degree, and all about him ready to burst with gold. Cræsus could not forbear smiling at the sight: and, allowing him to carry, as well as he could, his load away, added to it so much besides, that Alcimæon became conspicuous for his wealth at Athens; kept a chariot and four for the Olympic games; and had, once, the fortune to come off victor.

It may be thought, that Cræsus, in recompence for these largesses, had now a full indulgence of imaginary pleasure; the darling passion of his
mind

mind soothed, and his fondest hopes flattered: conquest, empire, and renown being, as he reckoned, ratified to him by the will of the gods. Indeed, this fancied scene of enjoyment became the fixed object of his thoughts. Its charms were too violently felt by him, and tended to agitate his mind to a degree incompatible with true delight. Instead of being satisfied with the prospect given him of his future good fortune, he wanted to have a larger view of it placed before him, and to dwell upon it with a kind of listless desire. The confidence he had in Apollo's veracity, and the joy his response gave, induced him to repeat his inquiries, and ask the oracle, Whether he should have constant possession of the promised empire. The Pythiesss replied to this purpose :

*When e'er a Mule shall over Media reign,
To Hermus' rocky clifts, O Lydian fly;
Nor let thy flight retarded be by shame.*

By

By a supposition of what was so glaringly absurd and impossible, the oracle was understood to put it out of all doubt, that Cræsus and his posterity should long remain invested with the sovereign power, and enjoy purchased empire along with it.

THE King of Lydia, now full-fraughted with the oracle's promises, thought himself called upon immediately to begin the scene of action, which was to lead to their accomplishment; and, that he might punctually obtemperate the direction of his guardian-god, he resolved to enter into a confederacy with the principal state in Greece. The two most eminent (one the head of the Ionic, and the other of the Doric stock) were the Athenian and Spartan nations. Pisistratus had twice usurped the sovereignty of Athens, as often been forced to abandon it, and was now a third time in possession. The havock and exilements occasioned by such revolutions, had considerably weakened the Athenians.

thenians. The people of Sparta had lately been several times defeated by the Tegæans ; and victory, which, at last, declared for them, hardly compensated their former ill fortune. But they had no intestine broils ; and a great part of Peloponnesus was subject to them.

CROESUS, understanding that such was the condition of both nations, desired an alliance with the Spartans, as most eligible. Ambassadors were sent to them, with proper presents, whose commission was expressed in the following terms : “ We are sent by Crœsus, “ King of Lydia and other nations, of “ whose address to the people of Spar- “ ta this is the copy :—Being advised “ by the oracle to form a Grecian alli- “ ance, such an one as you are fit par- “ ties of, who are known to be the “ chief people in Greece ; I make the “ request to you accordingly, and offer “ to be your friend and associate in war, “ without treachery or fraud.” The Lacedæmonians had heard of Apollo’s response;

response; were pleased to find themselves distinguished in this manner ; and, upon a late occasion, Cræsus had obliged them. Having sent to Sardis to buy a quantity of gold, which they needed for a statue, the King of Lydia gave it them, and would accept of no equivalent. These reasons were sufficient to dispose them to an alliance with him, as in every respect agreeable.

C H A P. IV.

Cræsus marches against the Persians, contrary to the advice of Sandanis. An engagement. Cræsus retires.

THE distrust of fortune which affected Cræsus, when first he meditated a war with Persia, changed now into such presumption of success, that, however encouraging it might be, proved not at all advantageous to the management of his affairs. It doubles the hazard attending any action, when it is undertaken

undertaken and executed with too great assurance of success: but, in such a design as Croesus had formed, not only to indulge hope, but to think his victory secured; was throwing all advantages into the scale of fortune opposite to him. This indeed could not well be avoided, after being flush'd, as he was, with Apollo's oracle; when he believed that the invasion of Persia was authorized by the gods, and the conquest of it ascertained to him. In connexion with this belief, he even discovered a pious cause of war with Cyrus, for having dethroned his own grandfather, Astyages the Median Emperor, who stood in near affinity to Croesus, by being married to Alyattes's daughter. Impelled by those motives, the King of Lydia precipitated the war; and, regardless of danger, hastened to take the field, without waiting till his allies were prepared to join him with their forces.

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IT

It was at this juncture, when the general acclaim followed the impetuosity of Cræsus for the expedition, that a Lydian, called Sandanis, opposed *his voice*, and dared to condemn the whole design. He had already acquired a character for wisdom and mature judgment ; but his counsel to Cræsus upon this occasion proved a memorable testimony of it. He expressed his sentiments in this manner : “ By thee, O
 “ King, preparation is made for war
 “ with a people, whose description I
 “ shall give. They use skins of beasts
 “ to case their limbs ; and skins compose their whole dress. They have
 “ no choice of food, but that kind
 “ only which a barren soil affords.
 “ Wine they taste not, nor any other
 “ drink, but water. They make no
 “ meals with figs, or any other dainty.
 “ Should they be overcome, What can
 “ be taken from such a people who enjoy nothing ? But, if they be victorious, think what a world of enjoy-
 “ ments

A *mina* was equal to $L. 3 : 4 : 7$
 60 *Minæ* or a talent of silver, - - $193 : 15 : 0$

A *talent* of gold, reckoning }
 the proportion of gold to }
 silver as 13 to 1, which, }
 as Herodotus says, was } $2518 : 15 : 0$
 so computed in Darius }
 Hiftaspes's reign, amount- }
 ed to }

The *Stater Cræsus* amounted to $1 : 12 : 3\frac{1}{2}$

Paces, feet, inches.
 The *stadium* or furlong was
 equal to $100 : 4 : 4$

The cubit - - - - - $1 : 6$

The *palm* was 4 fingers breadth.

The *amphora* was a measure of 7 gallons 1 pint.

A silver vessel containing 600 amphoras, mentioned in the history, may appear prodigious. We may suppose an error in the numeral epithet in Herodotus ; but there appears no sufficient authority to prove that, among the Greeks, the amphora was of less capacity.

“ments is lost by thee! Our delicious
“plenty being once tasted by them,
“they will cling to it; and no force
“will drive them away. I, verily,
“thank the gods, who put it not into
“the minds of the Persians to make
“war upon Lydia.” This speech from
Sandanis, which had all the clearness of
reason and good sense to enforce it, did
not shake the purpose of Croesus. He
aimed at glory more than gain; and
little considered at what odds he went
to war with the Persians, who, tho’
lately masters of Media, under the con-
duct of Cyrus, retained all their native
hardiness and penury.

THE Lydian army being drawn to-
gether, Croesus began his march, intend-
ing to penetrate into Cappadocia. This
province being now held by the Persians,
as part of their conquests from the Medes,
was of such extent and fertility, as ren-
dered it a most important prize. It’s
inhabitants were called Syrians by the
Greeks: it bordered upon the Halys,
K 2 which.

which hitherto had been the boundary of the Median and Lydian empires. This river, having its source from a mountain of Armenia, traversed the Cilician territory; and, continuing its course, separated the Matieni from the Phrygians: and then, turning northward, watered the confines of the Syrians and Paphlagonians; the former lying to the right, and the latter to the left of its current. Thus the Halys almost divides all that part of Asia, which reaches from the coast of the Mediterranean, over against the island of Cyprus, to the Euxine sea; which is a tract of land of full five days journey, computed after the antient manner.

CROESUS being advanced to the river with his army, passed it by throwing a bridge; or, according to a constant tradition in Greece, by help of a scheme prescribed to him by Thales the Milesian. As he was in the Lydian camp, when the passage of the
Halys

Halys obstructed their march; by his advice, it is said, they began above the camp, and opened a deep trench from the river which run upon their left, and carried it quite round by the right of the army; till, by closing with the river again, it formed a crescent. By this *sluice*, the current of the river was broke into two branches; neither of them being of a greater depth than could be easily forded. Some supposed them to have wholly drained the old channel: which is not a very probable opinion; since, in re-passing the river, they would have found the same difficulty.

CROESUS pitched his camp in a place of Cappadocia, called Pteria; being one of the strongest posts in all that country. From thence lawless war was spread over those borders; the lands of the Syrians being laid waste, the chief city of the Pterians taken and pillaged, and all the neighbouring towns sharing the same fate. Thus

did undeserved perdition overwhelm the innocent Syrians: whilst the King of Lydia distinguished not between the Persians and those compelled to submit to them. This only example, which history gives of his inhumane behaviour, shews, not only the shocking outrage and ferocity which conquerors at that time were not ashamed of, but that no person, however otherways governed by good affections, can aspire to be ranked in the tribe, without these losing their influence more or less, and being counteracted in several cases by the fiercer passions. The Persian Prince, mean while, was diligent in augmenting his forces with fresh levies of men, from all the provinces that lay between him and the enemy. It seemed as if he had been sensible of Croesus's imprudent conduct, in not allowing time for the auxiliary troops of his allies to come and re-inforce his army: which furnished an opportunity of overpowering him by numbers. He had also
been

been using endeavours to seduce the Ionians to a revolt ; but could not prevail with them, who were not so weary of their dependance upon Croesus, as to wish for a new master, and trusted in his ability to protect them.

CYRUS's army advanced to Cappadocia ; and, finding the Lydians still posted in Pteria, encamped by them. They began with skirmishing, and several assaults upon each other. A general battle ensued ; which was fought with great fierceness and obstinacy on both sides : till much blood shed, and night coming on, separated the armies ; neither of them having cause to claim the victory. But tho', in this engagement, the valour shewn and the losses sustained by both parties were equal, they were not upon equal terms to renew the battle. Croesus was aware of this, when he found how much more numerous the enemy's forces were than his own. In the morning, (Cyrus not offering to attack him) he drew off his
army ;

army; and, without any interruption from the Persians, continued his march towards Lydia. He resolved however, after the winter was past, to resume the *campaign*; and so to concert measures with his allies, that the reinforcements they were obliged to furnish might be assembled at Sardis early in the spring, in readiness to proceed with him against the Persians. For, besides the league with Sparta, he had entered into one with Amasis the Ægyptian King, and also with Labynetus Emperor of Babylon; by which both these Princes had engaged to assist him, either in defensive or offensive war.

CHAP.

C H A P. V.

Cyrus's expeditious march. Cræsus obliged to come to an action. The siege of Sardis. How it was taken.

IN all important revolutions, which befall a state or kingdom, it hath been, and still is, the vulgar opinion, that men are warned of them by some wonderful appearance or prodigy. It does not explode the superstition, that the omen is never well explained but by the event. A thing of strange portent is said to have been observed, soon after Croesus returned to Sardis. All the grounds about the suburbs were covered with serpents; and the horses left their pastures and devoured them. If this prodigy were so fatally ominous, as the tribe of interpreters at Telmessæ afterwards pronounced it, Croesus certainly had not the most distant apprehension of its meaning: tho', as every thing alarming to the public deserved
attention,

attention, he took care to inquire about it. But, with regard to the Persians, he thought it a clear point, that, after being so fully matched in the field, they could attempt nothing. They had neither offered a second battle, nor disturbed his march from Cappadocia; so that the force they had on foot, appearing to be half-vanquished, by thus declining all action, gave him no concern. He was so much of this mind, as, immediately upon his arrival at Sardis, to disband all the foreign troops which had served in the late action at *Pteria*.

THE reasons upon which the King of Lydia grounded his security were not so weak in themselves; they only became insufficient, by being applied to Cyrus. This Prince's vigilance and designing spirit (which was either not enough observed, or wholly overlooked by Crœsus) rendered his opinion blameable, and his present conduct dangerous. Perhaps he thought there was
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the less occasion to follow all the strict rules of caution and policy, with one who had but lately distinguished himself in war; and whose success against the Medes seemed chiefly owing to Harpagus's resentment and conspiracy. But Cyrus had, as the attendant of his natural genius for warlike enterprizes, a degree of circumspection and dexterity, which others attain by long experience. He had before taken all the advantage which his enemy's want of numbers gave him: and now he watched another opportunity which was likely to cast up, if Croesus believed himself under no necessity to guard against his designs. Upon receiving information, that all the foreign troops in the Lydian army were dismissed, he lost no time, but marched with all speed for Sardis. His army appeared in the neighbourhood of the city, before certain intelligence came what rout he had taken.

THE

THE King of Lydia, over-reached by the enemy, when least he thought of any such danger, and dubious what resolution was most adviseable in the perplexed state of his affairs, fixed upon that which had least the appearance of timidity and dismay. He drew out what forces he had to meet the Persians in the field. The Lydians, known at that time to equal any nation in Asia for martial bravery, vigour, and discipline, charged on horse-back armed with massy spears; being trained to great expertness in the management of their horses and weapons. The two armies faced each other in a spacious plain, affording a wide prospect on that side of Sardis where it opened, and having several rivulets crossing it, of which one, called Hellus, here joined with the Hermus larger than all the rest. This last rises in a mountain accounted sacred to Dindymene or Cybele, the mother of the gods, and falls
into

into the sea near where the city Phocia stood.

WHEN Cyrus viewed the Lydians ranged in order of battle, he dreaded the onset of the cavalry which was so much favoured by the ground; till Harpagus the Median advised him to the following stratagem. He gave orders to unload all the camels which followed the army with provision or baggage; and then, having mounted men upon them, clothed in the long *equestrian* robe; in this array they were placed before the other lines, that they might advance upon the Lydian cavalry, whilst the foot marched on behind them. In the rear of the infantry, the Persian horse were drawn up. After this disposition of his army, Cyrus, as certain of victory, commanded his soldiers to spare none of the Lydians, but to put all that made a stand to the sword; except Cræsus himself, whom they were by no means to kill, even tho' he should refuse to take quarter.

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THE parade of the camels (which we find Xenophon hath also inserted, in his account of the decisive battle with Croesus) was intended to baffle the main strength of the Lydians, which consisted in their cavalry; as horses are known never to endure the sight and smell of those animals. The Lydians had experience of it upon this occasion, to their irreparable loss: their horses being terrified at the approach of the camels, immediately broke their ranks, and wheeled away in disorder. Croesus saw the rout; and gave up all as ruined. But the Lydians, perceiving what caused this confusion, betook themselves to the only remedy; they sprung from their horses, and bravely encountered the Persians on foot. The combat was bloody and desperate; many fell on both sides: at length, numbers prevailed; the Lydians being forced to fly into Sardis. The Persians followed them; and began to form the blockade of the town.

CROESUS,

CROESUS, besieged in his capital, had yet some prospect of relief; as he reasonably supposed that the taking of the town and citadel would be a work of some labour and time.

HIS allies had been already summoned to prepare their supplies: but, as the time fixed for their assembling was so distant, he sent them intelligence of his being reduced to an extremity that required the speediest assistance they could give. The Spartans, among the rest, having this pressing request made to them, got ready their fleet and forces with all the expedition which their circumstances allowed: being concerned for the distress of Cræsus, whose character and friendship they highly valued; and looking upon his downfall as a sensible loss to themselves. His other allies, as appears from history*, were no less warmly attached to him. But fortune, which had now forsaken the King of Lydia, prevented all designs and endea-

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vours

* Justin. lib. 1.

vours to rescue him; and threw every lucky accident in Cyrus's way.

THE Persian Prince made several assaults upon the city, which failed. On the fourteenth day of the siege, he caused proclaim a reward to any who should first mount the ramparts. The soldiers tried it in vain: till a chance-discovery, by one Hyræades a Mardian, directed the scaling of the citadel, at a part where no guard was kept; the vast steepness and height being judged inaccessible to an enemy. An old tradition too passed about it, That Meles, one of the first Kings of Sardis, having carried Leo, his son by a concubine, round the walls of the citadel, upon the faith of the Telmissæan diviners that it should never be taken where the circuit was so made by him; he thought it superfluous to do it in this place, where nature had formed so strong a defence. It is never the power of a charm, but something in it's application, which is supposed deficient. Hy-
ræades

ræades had observed one of the Lydian foldiers find his way down this unguarded precipice of the citadel, to recover his helmet which had accidentally fallen. He confidered, it might be practicable to afcend by this direction; and had refolution enough to make the attempt, which fucceeded. The Perfians, to whom he had communicated his design, followed his example, and mounted up one after another; till fuch a number got together, as were fufficient to cut off the garrifon. Upon which Sardis immediately furrendered. This account of taking the city is much the fame with that we have in Xenophon. As he relates it, Cyrus made a falfe attack upon the town, while a body of Chaldeans and Perfians fcaled the ramparts where they appeared to be moft impregnable; being conducted, under night, by one who had ferved a foldier in the citadel, and knew all the paffes about it. As for Crœfus,

he escaped death by a kind of miracle. He had yet a son whose internal faculties were not impaired, notwithstanding what was said before of his being a mute. His father, while in a state of prosperity, ever retained the tenderest concern for his cure; and, having done all in his power to accomplish it, he at last consulted the oracle of Delphos. The answer given by the Pythioness was to this purpose:

*Great as thou art in birth and sway, be wise;
Better thy ardent wish be still deny'd:
That day, thy son, with sounds articulate,
Awakes thine ear, shall surely date thy woe.*

As the Persians rushed into the city, one of them coming up to Cræsus, without knowing who he was, appeared determined to take his life. Cræsus never thought of avoiding the imminent danger; having no conception of any thing more grievous than what he
now

now suffered, either in death or life. But his son, never before capable of uttering a distinct sound, strongly moved with fear for his father, broke out into these words ; “ *Man ! kill not Cræsus.*” And from that time he continued to have the use of speech.

THUS, the Persians got possession of Sardis, and took Cræsus prisoner : when he had reigned fourteen years, endured a siege of as many days ; and overturned, says our historian, according to the oracle, *his own* mighty empire.

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T H E
HISTORY OF CROESUS.

P A R T IV.

C H A P. I.

Cræsus condemned to be burnt upon the pile.

How released. Cyrus friendly and familiar with him. His answer to Cyrus's question, about his motive to the Persian war. His advice to Cyrus about the plunder of Sardis.

HERODOTUS * hath censured his countrymen the Greeks, for inventing, amongst their many idle fables, an absurd one relating to Hercules : That the hero, upon his arrival in Ægypt, was seized by the people, and led away in order to be sacrificed at the

* Lib. 2. par. 45.

the altar of Jupiter; but that, there exerting his invincible prowess, he saved himself by killing all who were present. Such a fiction, says our author, shows a gross ignorance of the manners and customs of the Ægyptians. For, how can it be thought probable, that a people, whose religion permitted them to make victims of only some few particular animals, should sacrifice men? Yet, notwithstanding of this apparent inconsistency, some antient writers maintained, that the Ægyptians dealt in human sacrifices. Plutarch, * in support of this opinion, mentions the impression of the seal used by their priests for stamping the victims, which was a man kneeling down with his arms bound and a sword at his throat.

WHAT our historian now proceeds to relate, is liable to an objection, grounded upon the same rule of probability by which he attacks the Grecian fable.

* De Iside et Osir.

fable. That Cyrus, so justly celebrated for many heroic virtues, should condemn Cræsus, when brought prisoner before him, to be burnt alive, may be deemed a very loose and incredible affirmation. Neither can we easily suppose, with Herodotus, that he might be prompted to offer such a sacrifice, as the first fruits of his victory to some god, or for the fulfilment of a vow; or that, having heard so much of Cræsus's piety, he was desirous to see if any heavenly power would interpose, and save him from being consumed in the fire. We find nothing, in what our author himself hath said of the sacred institutions of the Persians, that favours of any such barbarous superstition, as he here insinuates might be Cyrus's motive for acting inhumanely: on the contrary, it may be more justly concluded, from their worshipping the fire, that they religiously preserved the purity of that element; reckoning

koning it highly criminal, as Strabo says, to pollute it with filth or any dead carcass. But, while such remarks are made upon this part of Herodotus's narrative, we must remember, that it hath been copied by eminent historians of antiquity, who were more touched with the entertainment and instruction contained in the story, than with any objection that they knew might be raised against the probability of it.

By Cyrus's command, the Persians prepared a large pile of wood, to which Cræsus was conducted; and, after being bound in chains, was placed upon it, together with fourteen young Lydians. The view of death so instant and hideous, which Cræsus had there before him, did not so much disturb his reflection but that he called to mind what Solon had formerly said to him, *That no man ought to be judged happy before death.* He now believed that the Sage had been inspired to give him admonition.

monition. This thought proved the more insupportable, as it not only revived the idea of his former grandeur, but upbraided him with the vain confidence he had in its stability : so that, ready to sink under it, and deep sighs issuing from his labouring breast, he thrice pronounced the name of Solon. Cyrus heard him ; and desired the interpreters to ask, whom he thus invoked. At first, Croesus gave no reply ; but being urged to it, “ It is one, said he, whom “ I wish, most of any thing in the “ world, that all kings had conversed “ with.” This not being intelligible, they insisted to have his meaning further explained. To get free from their importunity, which was carried the length of molestation, he told them, That Solon the Athenian, who once had visited him, and been a spectator of his opulent and seemingly happy state, scorned all the pompous shew of it, and even denounced that very di-

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faster

faster which had since befallen him : adding, That Solon's reflexions were not confined to his particular case, but extended to the generality of mankind ; to such of them especially as were most possessed with a confidence in their prosperity.

WHILE Cræsus spoke to this purpose, the pile already kindled began to burn around the extremities. Cyrus having heard the discourse interpreted to him, a deep relenting worked in his mind : Nature's closest tie, powerful sympathy, softened all his thoughts, and inclined him, as a man, to commiserate another but late his equal in power and fortune, whom he had devoted a living victim to the flames. Being even in fear of vengeance pursuing him, after such defiance and mockery of misfortune incident to all men, he commanded that the fire should be presently extinguished, and Cræsus, and those that were with him, brought off from

from the pile. But, by this time, the flame raged so violently, that no means, which could be used, availed to controul it.

CROESUS perceiving, by the Persians thronging about the burning pile, and labouring, tho' in vain, to quench it, that his sentence was revok'd, he collected his spirit almost yielding to death, and breathed forth a prayer to Apollo; intreating his presence and succour, now in this last verge of fate, if ever any offering he had presented to him had been acceptable. As he thus prayed with tears in his eyes, the æther, till then very clear and serene, was suddenly overcast with clouds, which, bursting into an impetuous shower, beat down all the flames of the pile.

THIS incident of the marvellous rain sent by Apollo, is related upon a common report amongst the Lydians. They thought it perhaps too gross a reflexion upon the character of the god, to represent him altogether unconcerned for

their King, who was so generous a vortary of his; and that it was a small favour, when he had done nothing to preserve Crœsus's kingdom, to help to save his life. But, according to what is mentioned in Pausanias, the magical power of the Ephesian letters, the secret of which was known to Crœsus, enabled him to conjure the flames. Stories of the marvellous kind are infinitely variable; and those who credit one that is such, are obliged to believe many others.

BUT it is remarkable, that Crœsus procured his release from the sentence of death by mentioning what he once believed an indignity to be spoken before him: Solon's doctrine, for which he was frowned upon by the King of Lydia, appeared in so striking a light to Cyrus, as to check him in his purpose, and calm all his resentment. This different efficacy of the same doctrine is to be ascribed to the person who now was heard reflecting upon the vicissitude of
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of human affairs. Croesus, in his present forlorn state, confirmed, by irresistible evidence, the certainty of Solon's reasoning. And hence it was, as Plutarch observes, that philosophy triumphed, by saving one king and instructing another.

CYRUS, after having time for a little cool reflexion, was so far from judging Croesus punishable, or an object of resentment, that he resolved to treat him with all humanity and kindness due to a man fallen from the height of power, and in whom he saw every appearance of an honest disposition and a good heart. But, as he could not conceive what had been his motive for beginning, unprovok'd, an unnecessary and dangerous war, he wished to have the reason of this conduct explained, which seemed to be so inconsistent with his character: "Was
" it, said he to Croesus, owing to any
" man's instigation, that Thou, being
" the aggressor, didst invade, in a
M 3 " hostile

“ hostile manner, my dominions, and
“ chose to make me thy foe, who
“ might have been thy friend?” Cræ-
sus replied, “ Thy good destiny, O
“ King, and my evil one, directed the
“ part I acted. I have reason to accuse
“ none but the god of the Greeks, for
“ prompting me to undertake such an
“ enterprize. For, were men im-
“ pelled by no motive, but left freely
“ to chuse between peace and war;
“ they could not, without doing vio-
“ lence to nature and reason, be doubt-
“ ful which to prefer: since in the
“ one, fathers are buried by their sons;
“ in the other, aged fathers follow
“ their children to the grave. But
“ things run into such an unnatural
“ course, from some evil genius ha-
“ ving influence upon human actions.”

SUCH was the apology which Cræ-
sus offered for his conduct: and men
of all religions, in different places and
ages of the world, have strangely a-
greed in using much the same excuse
for

for their errors. But the argument, here formally stated against free-will in man, is not conclusive: since, notwithstanding many of the actions of mankind be really evil in their nature and consequence, they often mistake in judging of them, and chuse what is *morally* ill under the appearance of good. The bulk of mankind lay hold upon some general principle; and, without nicely examining it, proceed to a conclusion. Such, in the question about human liberty, is this of the prevalence of moral evil. And hence, as being obvious and known from experience, it was soon taken up, and most commonly reasoned from and adhered to.

CYRUS was pleased with Cræsus's delivering his sentiments with so much freedom and ingenuity; and encouraged him in it, from a persuasion that he might hear many things both entertaining and instructive. The favour and kindness which he shewed to Cræsus occasioned the Persian officers to
pay

pay him all manner of respect; so that they frequently took an opportunity to express themselves in commendation and praise of him. But Cræsus was now become proof against that levity, which is excited by the caresses and applause of others: he received these, when offered, without the least emotion; and accustomed himself to habitual recollection and silence.

HE did not, however, affect any fullen reservedness, or shew peevish discontent; but soon let Cyrus know, that, since he treated him with so much kindness, he would no more decline discharging to him, according to the utmost of his power, the offices of a friend, than he did accepting willingly the testimonies of his favour; and that he would not fail to give his best advice, as far as it might be acceptable. What first moved him to interpose it, was a sight which he could not behold without deep-felt concern; the plundering of Sardis by the Persian

fian soldiers. “ May I be allowed,
“ said he to Cyrus, to speak my mind?”
“ Thou mayst by all means,” replied
“ he. “ Inform me then, what means
“ this unruly concourse of thy troops?”
“ They are bent upon the plunder of
“ thy capital, and make booty of thy
“ riches.” “ No city, or any wealth
“ of mine, said Croesus, do they now
“ pillage. Call me not the owner.
“ They presume, at pleasure, to seize
“ the fruit of thy conquests” Cyrus
seemed touched with this reflexion;
but forebore taking notice of it, till his
attendants were dismissed. Then he
desired Croesus to tell him, what view
he had of that affair. “ Since the gods,
“ replied he, have made me thy cap-
“ tive, it is a part of service I owe to
“ communicate any observation of con-
“ sequence to thy interest which pre-
“ sents itself to me. The Persians are
“ naturally proud, as well as indigent.
“ If they be allowed to grasp great
“ riches, and hold them as their pro-
“ perty,

“ perty, consider what the effect will
“ be: He that hath acquired the most
“ wealth, will be the man most disposed
“ to renounce his allegiance. This
“ then is the course I would have taken,
“ with thy approbation, to prevent it,
“ in the present case: let a guard of
“ spearmen be placed at every gate, to
“ stop there all that carry off the rich
“ spoil; which, they must be told, is
“ to be detained, until the tenth, allotted
“ to Jupiter, be collected. By this
“ means thou shalt avoid the odium of
“ having compelled them to part with
“ their share of the treasure; and they,
“ being convinced that the demand is
“ just and reasonable, will yield a voluntary
“ compliance”.

NOTHING could have pleased Cyrus better than this method of checking the rapacity of his soldiers; to which he had, at first, given way, as Xenophon says, not from choice, but from an apprehension of a general discontent arising in the army, if they were deprived

prived of the expected harvest of their toils, upon taking the wealthy metropolis of Lydia. Cræsus's expedient was much applauded, and orders were issued for putting it in execution.

C H A P. II.

Cræsus's charge against the oracle. The light in which Apollo's advice to him may be viewed. The oracle's vindication. A sum of principles which the oracles espoused, and employed in defending themselves.

IN common life, the idea of misfortune is often connected with that of want of merit: In the meridian of a court, these perceptions are yet more rarely distinguished from each other. However, Cræsus, under the cloud of misfortune, which thus sinks the estimation of men, not only escaped contempt, but raised the opinion of his discernment

discernment and his other good qualities: so that Cyrus, from observing the manner in which he conversed and behaved, judged him to have every accomplishment becoming a king; and declared, that he should find no abridgement in his former state and dignity, except the power it gave him of making war.

THE principle, upon which Croesus chused to explain his ill fortune, concurred with the natural mildness of his temper, to make him endure, as patiently as any man, the downfall of his power. There was even observable in him, an unaffected calmness and tranquillity of mind, which Cyrus admired: But for all this, he could not help discovering, before that Prince, that he retained a resentment of his misfortunes, as brought upon him by Apollo whose advice he had followed. When Cyrus would have him to name something most agreeable to his wishes,
that

that he might do for him, he answered :
“ Thou shalt much oblige me, O Prince,
“ if I have thy leave to pay my ac-
“ knowledgements to the god of the
“ Greeks ; and to send him, honoured
“ as he hath been by me above all
“ other deities, the chains that I wore ;
“ together with this question, Whether
“ he counts it lawful to deceive his
“ benefactors ?” Cyrus asked him, what
he meant by such an accusation. In
answer to this, Crœsus acquainted him
with all that had passed between him
and the oracle : how its plausible re-
sponses engaged him to be lavish of his
presents, and to expect nothing but
success in the Persian war. He thought
so glaring a deceit deserved animadver-
sion ; and that he, being so fatal a
sufferer by it, might well be excused
for insisting to have it exposed. Cyrus
understood the unhappy reason which
Crœsus had for impeaching the oracle ;
but smiled at his design of resenting the
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abuse. He assured him, however, that he would readily gratify him in whatever he inclined.

WHATEVER was Cræsus's opinion, it must be owned a very doubtful point, what might be accounted lawful or unlawful for such a divinity as Apollo; since the history of the Grecian gods furnished many examples of their trampling over the most sacred of all human laws, without any derogation to their honour or credit. Had the unfortunate King never heard of this? or had he, in the height of indignation, forgot what has been but too much propagated in the world, that the character of deity is not to be scanned by men's conceptions of justice, goodness and truth; but must be held venerable, tho' sullied with the worst of human passions and frailties?

BUT, dropping for a little what may be said about the equity of Apollo's dealing with Cræsus, and supposing

supposing his divinity at perfect freedom to impose upon him or not as he pleased; What view or motive could there be, or what end proposed by the oracle, in leading on Cræsus to his ruin? It surely tended as little to the profit, as to the reputation of the Delphian god, to have one who was a most beneficent votary to him dispossessed of his wealth and kingdom! With the view of interest, nothing can be imagined more consistent than Apollo's attending to Cræsus's safety, and his interposing where the authority of his oracle was appealed to; so as to restrain, rather than prompt him, in a design that exposed him to the outmost hazard. As to the god's skill in divination; without inquiring to what it amounted, it may be supposed at least equal to the sagacity of Sandanis, who pointed out the plain absurdity and disadvantage of venturing a war with the Persians. If Apollo reasoned at all, it could not be from ignorance, that he

put Croesus on so dangerous an undertaking. To what then shall it be ascribed?

XENOPHON delivers it, as Croesus's own opinion of the matter, that Apollo had reason to be offended with the freedom the King of Lydia used in proving his veracity: since not only a god, but any virtuous man, might be displeased with those that entertained a distrust of him. Good men, however, have no right to implicate faith; nor will they require it, where there is any rational ground of doubt, and proper evidence only sought for. But, surely, if Apollo were placable, if he could forgive, the King of Lydia had atoned for all his offence. He had not only poured out the wealthiest offerings in his temple, but resigned himself wholly to the wisdom and direction of the Delphian oracle. No more could be done; even to quench the most inflamed resentment. The excuse, which the corrupted minions of a Court are
apt

apt to pretend for yielding to the vices of the Great, is perhaps the only one that can be alledged for Apollo's behaviour to Croesus. When they have found, say they, a king obliging and compliant with all their wishes; it would be indecent and ungenerous for them to oppose him in any thing, or disapprove of his designs: that his favourite pursuits, they are bound to indulge; tho', in the event, they may prove highly injurious to their own and his interest.

CROESUS, it seems, imagined he could shame the oracle, and affront Apollo; by shewing, at Delphos, his chains, as the only trophies of victory promised to him; and by asking, If it were allowable for the gods of the Greeks to be ungrateful? This was supposing Apollo as easily affected with a sense of shame, as himself and other men might be; and that his oracle, so fertile in responses, should be incapable of replying to his charge. But it ap-

peared to be quite otherwise, when the Pythioness returned this ample defence:
“ That it was not even in the power
“ of a god to evade the decrees of fate:
“ but that, in the present case, Cræsus
“ suffered for the crime of one from
“ whom he was the fifth in descent;
“ and who, being of no greater rank
“ than an officer of Candaules’s body-
“ guards, was seduced, by a piece of
“ female deceit, to murder his master,
“ and seize upon the sovereignty, which,
“ of right, belonged to the Heraclidæ.
“ That Apollo, being very solicitous
“ to have the destructive blow, which
“ threatened the Lydian monarchy,
“ transferred from Cræsus to his chil-
“ dren, found it impossible to controul
“ the fates. As much however as
“ could be obtained of them, he had
“ not failed to procure, and bestow, in
“ testimony of favour to him; having
“ postponed the taking of Sardis the
“ space of three years. Therefore
“ Cræsus ought to know, that his
capital

“ capital was spared from the enemy
“ all that time longer than the destinies
“ had assigned for it; and, besides, that
“ he had preserved him from being
“ consumed in the burning pile. But,
“ with regard to his oracle’s response,
“ Cræsus had no just cause of com-
“ plaint: for Apollo had said, That,
“ if he went to war with the Persians,
“ he should overturn a mighty empire.
“ If then he had been disposed to be
“ properly informed, he would have
“ sent again and inquired; Whether
“ the oracle might not mean his own
“ empire, as well as that of Cyrus?
“ But when he neither understood the
“ oracle’s answer, nor sought to have
“ it explained, none was to be blamed
“ but himself. In like manner, had he
“ mistook Apollo’s last intimation
“ about the Mule; since Cyrus might
“ be said to be one: whose parents were
“ of different nations, and unequal as
“ to birth and condition; the father
“ being much the meaner of the two.

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“ For the mother was a Median, and
“ daughter to the Emperor Astyages :
“ but he, a Persian ; who, tho’ born in
“ a state of subjection which made him
“ lower than any of the Medes, had
“ found means to espouse his royal
“ mistress.”

THIS apology for the oracle is extremely singular and curious: not only as it presents a sort of varnish for a palpable imposture, but affords a specimen of the principles upon which the oracles, or those that pleaded for them, supported their reputation against any attack.

WHEN men came to reason closely, and philosophy would sit as umpire upon the oracles and all sorts of divination ; it was urged, as an invincible argument against them, that, upon the hypothesis of chance, any such foresight of contingent events must be contradictory and impossible ; and upon that of fate, it must be at least useless and insignificant, if not hurtful to mankind:
since

since a discovery of evil to come, which can by no means be prevented, is ever accompanied with pain and disturbance to the mind; and even the assurance of good, where it is very distant, hath not always a happy influence. The oracles however every where embraced the doctrine of fatalism; and vouched it to be true, both as to gods and men: so that, as is here intimated to Crœsus, none of the human race were intitled to challenge the appointments of destiny, by which the immortal powers themselves were bound. This doctrine, once propagated, would soon be found to stand them in greater stead, than any logical inference from it might be supposed to hurt their cause. For, besides that the bulk of mankind are unmoved with abstract reasoning, it is plain, that the natural passion to know futurity will exert itself, independent of all reflexion.

THE gods were supposed to have access to inspect the records of fate; tho' they

they could not blot or amend one line. The most they pretended to, was obtaining some respite in the execution of a decree with which they thought themselves concerned. By their oracles, they imparted to men the secrets of destiny, without undertaking to justify its procedure. But, where any thing very severe and afflicting befell a state or particular persons, they endeavoured to assign some reason, and hush their loud complaints. It was not very difficult to alledge many causes, probable enough, why men wanted success in their designs, and found themselves involved in calamities: and yet the oracles often condescended upon such as were extremely pitiful and trifling; which the excess of folly and superstition only would have regarded. Apollo was lucky, at this time, in being able to account for Cræsus's overthrow upon a more plausible ground. He had no more to do but to recollect the intrigue of Candaules's Queen with Gyges;

Gyges; plead the rights of the Heraclidæ, together with the sovereign's life invaded by him from whom Cræsus derived his title. But, tho' it was a Grecian family, sprung from their first hero, against whom this outrage was committed; the god of Delphos testified no regard to their right, or any just detestation of the crime that attended the usurpation of it, when it was the proper season to have done so: On the contrary, as the history informs us, the authority and sanction of his oracle was procured to fix Gyges on the throne. The oracle indeed threatened, that his posterity should suffer for it; and punishment be exacted in the fifth generation: which menace Gyges and his successors contemned; as well they might, believing it thrown out to save appearances, and not from any zeal the Delphian god could be known to have for the maintenance of family-titles to crowns and dignities: since these might frequently
be

be seen transferred by him from one hand to another, without any respect to such limitations.

WHEN no charge, like to this advanced against Croesus's family, could be specified, nor any personal defect pointed out; the oracles had still in reserve one grand principle, which they solemnly delivered and applied, when requisite, for silencing all the murmurs and complaints of their votaries. This was the established maxim of arbitrary punishment; to which whole nations might for a season be consigned. Our historian hath recorded a singular example of this method being taken with Mycerinus, ranked, for his virtues, amongst the best kings of Ægypt. When the oracle of Butis declared he should die within seven years, he could not bear the dismal preface; but reproached the oracle with the severity and injustice of his doom: alleging that his father and uncle, who had shut up the temples, despised the gods,

gods, and destroyed men, were allowed to prolong their lives; while he, piously affected as he had shew'd himself, was thus sentenced to an untimely death. To which the oracle replied, "That, for this very reason, his life
"was shortened, because of his not
"having done what he ought: that
"Ægypt was condemned to a state of
"suffering for eight and fifty years,
"which the two kings before him having learned had acted agreeable to
"the decree of fate; whilst he chused,
"by his practice, to impugn the condemnation." To expose the falsehood of this oracle, and bring it under disgrace; Mycerinus formed a desperate resolution tending to secure the accomplishment of the prediction, and hasten his ruin. Having collected a number of lamps, he revelled constantly thro' the night; imagining, by this means, he should turn it into day, and so live double the time assigned by the oracle.

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It was another well-known device amongst the oracles, to couch their responses under all the ambiguity of metaphorical language and equivocal terms. This stile became so familiar to their votaries, that they hardly looked for any other; and were contented, if, at a stretch of invention, they could pick out the meaning. When what was taken to be the oracle's judgment was contradicted by the event, the inquiry was renewed, and the oracle sometimes challenged to vindicate its decision; which was done, at once, by an artful gloss or specious turn given to the expressions. Apollo shewed his subtlety in this way to be an overmatch for Cræsus's plainness. But, his defending his equivocal answer, by saying, that the oracle should have been consulted again, is a mere evasion of the charge; which Cræsus founded upon his wanting that ingenuity, candour, and regard, which was due to one who had, with uncommon zeal, expressed

fed his esteem and reverence of his divinity: since his response was so framed, that, instead of warning him of danger, it served chiefly to push him down the precipice. After such a deceitful reply, none could be satisfied by any future inquiry, where the fallacy was to stop. The far-seeing Apollo, whilst he deign'd not to assist by his prescience those that consulted him, unless they followed him thro' a labyrinth of intricate expressions, could only pretend to vie with Proteus in merit and significance: whose talent of divination was highly esteemed; but his mutable genius, and his borrowed forms, required to be subdued by Herculean labour and tenfold chains.

AFTER all, Cræsus is said to have admitted the Delphian god's apology, and acknowledged himself to be in the wrong. There was truly nothing to be gained by maintaining the controversy: redress he could have none; and resentment, especially in such a case, is but

a sorry companion. But, tho' some cool reflexion might dissipate his indignation, it is hard to say how far all the arguments of the oracle might convince him of his having met with no injustice. It was his misfortune to doubt, at first, of the credit due to oracles; and, when induced to believe in Apollo, he found himself deceived and injured by that belief. This was a critical situation; and very unfavourable, one would think, to the re-establishment of his faith. Yet, if we could suppose him a thorough-bred devotee, and to have grown up under the influence of a zealous principle; he might have calmly acquitted Apollo, and comforted himself, as Cicero assures us his friend Deiotarus did: who, after losing a kingdom, and being fined in a great sum by Cesar, denied that he repented his trusting the auspices, which appeared very favourable, when he set out to join Pompey; since the authority of the senate, the liberty of
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the Roman people, and the dignity of the empire, had been supported by his arms : saying that the birds, by whose direction he had adhered to his duty and his honour, had consulted best for him ; *For glory was more sacred to him than all his possessions.*

C H A P. III.

The Lydians, by Pactyas's instigation, revolt. Cyrus enraged against them. Cræsus's speech in their behalf. An objection to it considered. Pactyas's fate. The Lydians obliged to change their antient discipline. The effect of such policy upon the Persian empire.

THE conquest of Lydia being accomplished, Cyrus would not amuse his ambition with what he looked upon as only the gleanings of it. Such was the reduction of the Ionians and Æolians ; who now offered to sub-

mit to him, upon the same terms they had before done to Croesus: but he refused to grant them this indulgence; and, in his answer to their request, derided the affected complaisance which they now shewed, after having withstood all his former solicitations. And, when the Lacedæmonians declared by their ambassador that they would never suffer any of the Grecian cities in Asia to be injured, Cyrus asked, “What kind
“ of men the Lacedæmonians were, and
“ how numerous they might be?” Being told that they were a very powerful state in Greece: his return was, “That
“ he dreaded none of those people who
“ had places set apart in the middle of
“ their towns, where they assembled to
“ traffic and cheat one another with
“ oaths; and that he might live to
“ give them cause to regret their own
“ situation, and not that of the Ionians.” But Cyrus had planned out for himself a higher scene of glory: he

he longed to lead his victorious forces against Babylon, to controul the Scythians, and extend his empire into Ægypt. He therefore despised to act in person against the Ionians; and committed the revenge of his quarrel with them to Mazares, one of his generals. Having appointed Tabalus commander of the garrison left in Sardis, and commissioned Pactyas, a Lydian, to see the treasure, found in the city, collected and sent up to him; he set out for Ecbatana, the metropolis of Media: where he could, with more readiness, make the preparations necessary for prosecuting the schemes he had formed. Upon this occasion, he carried Crœsus along with him: which, says Xenophon, he always chused to do; either, because he thought his advice might be useful, or, that it was a safe and easy way of securing his person.

BUT ambition sometimes lurks where it is least suspected; and, when it breaks forth,

forth, dares the more by being desperate. When Pactyas found that Cyrus was gone, he spirited up the Lydians to a revolt; and, being master of the treasure, fitted out some gallies, and put to sea. He engaged into his service as many mercenaries as he could find, and induced numbers of the seafaring people about the coast of Asia to join with him. Pactyas, having by this means drawn together the force of an army, marched to Sardis, and laid siege to the citadel commanded by Tabalus.

CYRUS, having intelligence of this upon his journey, expressed his indignation to Croesus in this manner: “Be-
“hold what an endless task is reserved
“for me, if my affairs go on at this
“rate! The Lydians seem determined
“not to give over embroiling me and
“themselves. I am seriously consider-
“ing, whether it were not best to sell
“them all for slaves; for truly I have
“acted

“ acted like one who slays the father
 “ and spares the children : since I
 “ have made thee a captive who wert
 “ more than a father to the Lydians,
 “ and have left them in possession of
 “ their city. Is it not then amazing
 “ that they should revolt ?” Croesus,
 observing that Cyrus breathed a spirit
 of vengeance which was like to pro-
 duce some fatal resolution against Sar-
 dis, made this reply : “ What thou
 “ hast spoken, O Prince, is intirely
 “ agreeable to truth ; but let not the
 “ heat of passion prevail with thee to
 “ destroy an antient city, which can-
 “ not be justly blamed for the former
 “ or this present offence. I am the
 “ person who gave the first provoca-
 “ tion ; and I accordingly suffer for it :
 “ Pactyas, intrusted by thee at Sardis,
 “ is chargeable with the second ; let
 “ him feel the weight of thy venge-
 “ ance. But, tho’ thou shouldst spare
 “ the Lydians, they may be so ma-
 “ naged, as to remove all suspicion of
 “ their

“ their revolting again. Issue thy com-
“ mands for them to lay aside the use
“ of arms. Order them to wear a
“ cloak above their vests, and to put
“ on buskins. Require them to have
“ their children instructed to play upon
“ the harp, to sing, and keep taverns.
“ When this is done ; soon, O King,
“ shalt thou see them changed from
“ men into women, who will trouble
“ thee no more with their insurre-
“ ctions.”

THE occasion upon which Cræsus now spoke being extremely critical; when the Lydians had rendered themselves obnoxious, and Cyrus, enraged, was only hesitating about the degree of their punishment; it required all the address that is here used, in attempting to extenuate their crime and soften his resentment. Any one may discern that this is done so artfully by Cræsus, that his intention could hardly be frustrated. He checks Cyrus's indignation, without calling it severe upon the
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the offending Lydians, but upon their city; venerable, and, as it were, sacred, for its antiquity. He declares the people blameless about the war with Cyrus, and accuses himself; owning, that, being the only real offender, he justly incurred the punishment: he then charges Pactyas with acting the same part he had formerly done by instigating the Lydians to rebell, with the addition of perfidy to his crime; and calls for deserved vengeance to pursue him. But, lest this should appear a sacrifice unproportioned to Cyrus's resentment, which was fired against all the Lydians; he points out a method by which Cyrus might effectually obtain his purpose of enslaving them, and have them delivered over to him fast bound in the fetters of sloth and effeminacy.

SOME however will be of opinion, that Croesus might as well have given way to the actual enslaving of the Lydians;

dians; as proposed what was so debasing to their spirit and injurious to their credit and fame: at least, that he ought to have unfolded no such scheme, until things came to an extremity, and Cyrus had given his orders for dragging the Lydians into bondage. That sense of civil liberty and public spirit, so esteemed in Greece and Rome, and that charms us in their annals, inforces this objection. But, amongst the Lydians and all the Asiatic nations, any such taste of it was never known. With them, its essence consisted altogether in martial spirit and bravery; which behoved, of course, to rise or decline in particular monarchies, according to their circumstances, as good or ill fortune attended them. Croesus saw that the Lydians, now irrecoverably fallen, by unhappily exerting their warlike disposition, did only exasperate the conqueror; and that the continuance of it would certainly bring utter destruction upon

upon them. He desired to provide against this sad consequence: the thought of which perhaps impressed his mind with a more aggravating view of the mischief of his conduct; and therefore he endeavoured, by his proposal, at once, to appease Cyrus's present anger, and secure the future quiet and tranquillity of the Lydians. In this light, Herodotus considers the advice given by Cræsus, as flowing from his tender sympathy with the sufferings of his country, and the fear of a heavier load of calamity being entailed upon it.

CYRUS immediately detached a part of his army under the command of Mazares, a Median general: ordering him to see, That the Lydians were made to conform to the regulations Cræsus had suggested, that all who from other countries joined in the revolt were sold for slaves, and that Pactyas were taken alive and brought prisoner to him. Mazares's approach struck the

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traitor

traitor and his followers with terror: he fled upon the first notice of it, and took refuge in the city of the Cummæans. They were unwilling to deliver him up; but, dreading the resentment of the Persians, agreed to refer the case to the oracle of Apollo amongst the Branchidæ. The god answered, That he ought to be surrendered up to the Persian general. But Aristodicus, a man of great probity and esteem among the people, insisted, that, to remove all doubt, the question should be again stated to the oracle. He was chosen one of the number who went and proposed it; and heard the oracle repeat the former answer. Upon which, Aristodicus, going industriously round about the walls of the temple, took down the nests of sparrows and other birds that hatched there. Whilst he was doing this, it is said, that a voice came forth from the sacred shrine, audible to Aristodicus, in these words:

“Thou

“Thou profanest of mortals! How
“darest thou make such an attempt,
“and carry off my supplicants from
“the temple?” To which Aristodius
composedly replied, “Doeſt thou,
“O Maſteſty Divine! thus proteſt all
“thy own ſupplicants; and yet com-
“mandeſt the Cumæans to abandon
“one ſingle perſon that was admitted
“to be theirs?” The god made an-
ſwer in theſe terms: “May the per-
“dition of the impious deſcend upon
“your heads, that you may come no
“more to interrogate the oracle about
“the diſpoſal of your ſupplicants!”
This harſh language from Apollo threw
the people of Cuma into greater per-
plexity: irrefolute and fearful, they
wiſhed to be rid of Paſtyas, and ſent
him off to Mytelene, and from thence
to Chios; where, tho’ he took ſanctu-
ary in Minerva’s temple, the Chians
entered into a bargain with the Gene-
ral, and delivered him up for a piece of
land.

MAZARES, in the mean time, having marched up his troops to Sardis, obliged the Lydians to admit that change in their political establishment which Cyrus required. As every people, whose genius for warlike glory has been pushed to a certain boundary beyond which it cannot pass, are apt to revolt into the contrary extreme; the Lydians advanced with precipitation towards effeminacy and love of pleasure: their course of good fortune and their vast opulence having already prepared them for embracing, without reluctance, a voluptuous life. Sardis afterwards became one of the principal theatres of luxury and pomp for the Persian vice-roys; many of which, according to the unsound policy of the court, were erected thro' the provinces of the empire. The effect was to procure, for that unweildy body, an internal quiet or rather a stupefaction in its several parts: since, like opiates applied to the human constitution, it produced

produced a consumption of all natural spirit and vigour, and rendered the mass of monarchy, first, the scorn, and, at length, the prey of the Grecians.

THE other part of Cyrus's commands was punctually fulfilled by Mazares : he marched with his forces into all the neighbouring states, from whence Pactyas had received any assistance. The people of Priene were seized upon, and sold as the lawful prize of war : the rich and beautiful plain, watered by the Meander, was pillaged by his soldiers ; who had also the plunder of the wealthy city of Magnesia to glut their rapacity. His death happening in a short time after, he was succeeded in command by Harpagus, who proceeded to wage much the same kind of war against the Ionians.

C H A P. IV.

*Cyrus's expedition against the Massagetæ.
The point about passing the Araxes disputed by Cræsus. His scheme of ensnaring the enemy approved by Cyrus.
Tomyris's son taken prisoner. Cyrus's defeat and death.*

THE success of Cyrus's grand expedition against Babylon is particularly related, both by Herodotus and Xenophon who agree in one main circumstance: that he made the Euphrates passable, and marched his foldiers by night along the channel of the river, and, by this artifice, surpris'd and got possession of that imperial city; which gave him the dominion of all Asia. Xenophon is singular in having mentioned nothing of the war in which Cyrus afterwards engaged with the Massagetæ: since, as Strabo observes, many historians had given account of it; tho' they had either omitted to describe

scribe the situation and manners of that people, or were totally ignorant about them.

THE Massagetæ, according to our historian, were a very numerous, bold, and hardy people, inhabiting part of that vast plain which stretches eastward from the Caspian sea and appears of an unlimited extent. They were reckoned to be of Scythian extract: being, at this time, governed by their Queen Tomyris, after the death of her husband. Cyrus, having formed the design of invading them, sent a message to the Queen; that he proposed to have her in marriage. She understood well enough this prelude to war: and he soon followed it, by appearing at the head of his army, upon the banks of the river Araxes which runs upon the confines of her kingdom.

WHILE Cyrus was employed in throwing a bridge of boats, with turrets raised upon it, for the safer passage of his troops; Tomyris sent a herald
to

to acquaint him, that he might spare himself all that labour: for, if he would not desist from his purpose of invading her territories, he might have it in his choice either to pass the river while her forces retired three days march from it, or, to allow the Massagetæ the opportunity of advancing to attack him, by withdrawing his troops the same distance. Cyrus consulted with his officers about this proposal; and found them agree in opinion to let Tomyris pass over the Araxes with her army. Croesus was of a different mind from them all; and gave his reasons for it in the following manner:

“ALREADY, O King! said he, I
“ have declared, that, since Jupiter had
“ put me in thy power, I would, to
“ the utmost of my ability, observe
“ and prevent any false step that might
“ be taken in what concerns thy wel-
“ fare. For, some experience I have
“ learned under the hard discipline of
“ my

“ my misfortunes. And, did I now
 “ suppose thee to reckon upon thyself
 “ and those under thy command, as if
 “ you were all immortal, I should not
 “ vainly disclose my sentiments: But,
 “ as thou knowest that thyself, and
 “ others subjected to thee, are men, this
 “ ought to be regarded by thee, as a
 “ first principle, *That all human affairs*
 “ *revolve in a circle*; and that hence
 “ none are permitted to be equally
 “ fortunate. Even upon this general
 “ maxim, I am induced to differ from
 “ those who have given counsel upon
 “ this occasion. For, if we shall wait
 “ till the enemy come to fight us in
 “ this country, behold what danger is
 “ incurred! By being defeated, thou
 “ mayst lose thy whole empire: since
 “ it is evident, that, if the Massagetæ
 “ gain the victory, they will not stop
 “ their career, but fall directly upon
 “ the dominions of Persia. But, again,
 “ supposing that thou obtainest the
 “ victory, it must be a very incom-
 “ plet

“ pleat one, compared to that which may
“ be pushed on defeating them in their
“ own country. For then, as I first in-
“ ferred upon supposition of their being
“ victorious, thou shalt have power to
“ subdue Tomyris’s kingdom. Besides
“ all this, will it not be a shameful thing
“ and inexcusable in Cyrus, son of Cam-
“ byses, to yield, in a point of action,
“ to a woman, and seem to decline an
“ engagement! Wherefore, my opinion
“ is, that we should pass the river, and
“ continue our march until they come
“ to oppose us : and then we may try,
“ by some such stratagem as this, to
“ vanquish them in battle. As I am
“ informed, the Massagetæ are unac-
“ customed with such delicate provi-
“ sions for the appetite as are common
“ among the Persians, and know as
“ little what it is to be satisfied when
“ plenty of these things are placed in
“ their way. Imagine, then, That, in
“ our camp, a number of sheep were
“ killed and dressed for their entertain-
“ ment ;

“ment ; that, for an addition, a
“sufficient quantity of unmixed wine
“and other kinds of viands were there
“exposed ; and that, when this is done,
“we should leave about the camp all
“that are infirm and weak among the
“soldiers, and march the main body of
“the army back toward the river : In
“this case, if I am not much mistaken
“of those people, when they draw
“near and find all this abundance of
“good cheer, they will fall greedily
“upon it ; and then is the time for us
“to perform an important exploit.”

As Crœsus thus ventured to speak his sentiments in an affair of war, and opposed the judgment which the Persian officers had given upon it ; he very properly took occasion to repeat what he had at first declared, of his having submitted to Cyrus, as a master, upon a religious principle : which rendered his attachment to him sacred, and his zeal for his interest as little suspicious as that of his most faithful servants.

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He next pleads his experience purchased from adversity, as the only title he had to offer advice. And then, without pretending to argue the point from the rules of war, he desires them only to consider the changeful course of human affairs : which if they reflected upon, the allowing the enemy an opportunity to engage them in the confines of Persia would not appear a thing so indifferent ; since, by losing a battle, they risked the loss of their whole empire. It may be presumed, that Crœsus had the greater reason to urge this consequence, from what he had heard of the number and strength of the Massagetæ ; who, as Tomyris intimated in her message to Cyrus, were in a condition not only to repel his invasion, but, being provoked, to carry the war into his kingdom. Tho' reason and experience both supported Crœsus's opinion, of its being the more safe and eligible measure to make the enemy's country the scene of action ; yet, that Cyrus might

might be more touched with his reasoning, he added, that it was unsuitable for him to retreat before Tomyris. This argument must be owned to be very different from the first general maxim which he lays down: but the nature of it is such, that it could hardly be misplaced; and the Prince of Persia undoubtedly considered it, as an additional motive for preferring Cræsus's proposal to that which had the suffrages of the ablest commanders in his army, when he took the resolution of advancing into the country of the Massagetæ.

BEFORE Cyrus proceeded to cross over the Araxes, he declared his son Cambyfes to be heir of the kingdom, and delegated to him the sovereign authority: * hence it became an established form for the Persian kings to name their successors, when they were personally to attend a foreign war. Those, who in Persia were stiled the king's

Q judges,

* Herod. lib. VII. pag. 1.

judges, and whose office consisted in expounding the fundamental laws of the state, had probably laid hold of this example which was set by the founder of their monarchy, and turned it into a statute; not only with a view to prevent disputes about the succession, but that their princes might be the less inclined to wage distant wars and lead out those vast armies, that, from pride and ostentation, were always summoned around them in their campaigns; when they found it would oblige them to do what is often inconvenient and generally disagreeable to sovereigns. But this political regulation proved almost insignificant in such a despotic government: It sometimes embarrass'd the kings of Persia; without being a sufficient check upon the wantonness of their arbitrary power, blindly impelled by ambition.

CAMBYSES being appointed to return into Persia and take charge of the kingdom, Cyrus also determined to
send

send Crœsus along with him; and strictly enjoined his son not to fail in respect and kindness to him, in case any thing unfortunate should happen in the expedition against the Massagetæ. This was a true sentiment of honour and magnanimity, by which great souls are ever distinguished. Cyrus would not have the oblique eye of suspicion to glance upon a person whom he judged worthy to be trusted: he would not have the counsel, in which he freely acquiesced, to be condemned on account of any unforeseen consequence attending it.

WHEN Cyrus had got a day's march beyond the river, he drew off all the best troops of his army, and retired with them, according to Crœsus's scheme; having left behind in the camp the refuse of the soldiers. A division of the enemy's forces, amounting to about a third of the whole, soon approached; and, emboldened by what they spied of the defenceless condition of the Persian

camp or by what they heard of Cyrus's retreat, they fell upon the poor remainder of his army, and cut in pieces all who stood in the way; and then, from tumultuous joy and want of proper discipline, they gormandized and drunk, till the bulk of them lay buried in surfeits and sleep. Cyrus's forces came upon them in this plight, slew numbers, and took many more prisoners. Tomyris's son, Sargapizes, who commanded this body of the Massagetæ, was among the latter. His chains were fastened upon him before he knew what had befallen him: but having recovered his senses overpowered with wine, and perceived his wretched situation, he requested Cyrus, that he might be unbound; which being granted, he seized the first instrument he could find, and put himself to death. In this, we are apt to think that Sargapizes acted altogether from despair, with the wild rage of a Barbarian, as he was by nation: but a Roman or a Grecian, acting

acting the same part, we would suppose to be animated by a laudable shame and a sense of honour, that rendered death more eligible than infamy.

TOMYRIS, filled with grief and rage for the loss of her son, was yet confident of her ability to revenge this cruel stroke upon Cyrus. Disdaining his victory, in which no military virtue, but fraud alone, was displayed, she drew together all her forces, and resolved to throw her whole fortune upon the issue of a battle. And such was the report of fame concerning this engagement, that Herodotus reckons it must have been fought with more steady prowess and vigour, than any other that ever happened between two (as he calls them in the usual language of the Greeks) barbarian armies. According to what he heard in general concerning the action, it began with a discharge of arrows and missive weapons; which being spent, the two armies closed upon each other with their lances and swords.

Q 3 Obstinately

Obstinately for a long time both maintained the conflict; neither of them would give way. At last the Massagetæ became victorious. A great slaughter was made in the Persian army: and Cyrus himself fell among the slain; after he had reigned, says our historian, nine and twenty years. It is well known what opposite facts are related, by Herodotus and Xenophon, with regard to other important passages of Cyrus's history, besides the different account they give of the manner of his death. * Some modern critics have taken great pains to prove, that Xenophon's authority in this is much more to be depended on than that of our historian. The question may be ingeniously treated, but cannot be resolved with any degree of certainty. Since the one, in what he wrote of Cyrus, exactly followed the traditions that were reported of him in Persia and
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* *Memoire de l'Academ. des inscrip.* Vol. 6. page 400. par Abbé Banier.

in Greece: the other polished finely the informations he had, so as to suit with the plan of his work; that nothing but what was agreeable and useful might appear in his narrative; and that Cyrus might shine, thro'out the whole, an illustrious example of a virtuous Prince accomplished in war and in the arts of government.

C H A P. V.

Cambyse's character. He invades Ægypt. Memphis taken. Psammenitus cruelly used by him. His expedition into Æthiopia. His rage against the gods of Ægypt. Cræsus's delicate turn to a question of his. Cambyse, reproved by Cræsus, attempts to put him to death. Cræsus's character.

CAMBYSES, now by right of succession, assumed the scepter which had been a short time before committed to him by his father. It is
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no argument that Cyrus had conceived any great opinion of his son's talents for government, because he thought proper to invest him with the administration of public affairs at a particular juncture ; when he had reason to apprehend that his being detained at a distance from the center of his dominions might be attended with some disagreeable consequence. But, by his having carried Cambyfes along with him to see a campaign, and by his care to place Crœsus about him as a proper companion and confident when he was sent back into Persia ; * Cyrus appears to be unjustly charged with neglecting paternal duty, because Xenophon hath taken no notice of his bestowing any pains in educating his children. † Plato insists, (notwithstanding all he must have known of the fine institutions of the Persians for training up their youth) that Cyrus's sons were never formed

* See Rollin, voll. ii. page 281.

† De legibus, lib. iii.

formed by any discipline but that of the women and eunuchs at court. He reckons, that, in this school, the young Princes, Cambyfes and Smerdis, were used to hear nothing but their high birth and condition vainly applauded, to have their wills always complied with, and to receive encomiums upon whatever was said or done by them. Cambyfes's actions might justly give occasion to the sublime Philosopher to suppose, that he was educated in the worst of ways: they were of such a nature, that a mind, originally deformed and base, required to be pushed on by all the accessory methods of depravation to produce them. Indeed his character rather strengthens what some have objected to Herodotus's account of the defeat and death of Cyrus. It is alledged, that these two events coinciding must necessarily have dismembered an empire but lately established; especially when the helm of affairs fell into hands so rude and violent.

violent as Cambyſes had in government: yet, allowing this objection all its weight, it proves only that there is ſomething in this paſſage of hiſtory which may be accounted a prodigy in politics; and ſurely there are many well-known facts that appear ſo.

IT is certain, that Cambyſes found the monarchy in ſuch a condition, as gave his ambition and vanity full ſcope to exert themſelves. Some perſonal diſguſt he had conceived, againſt Amapiſ King of Ægypt, made him prepare for war. A conſiderable body of Grecian troops was raiſed in the countries of Ionia and Æolia, and added to the army which he intended to employ in this expedition: and the Phœnicians furniſhed him with a fleet, to carry warlike ſtores and ſecure the navigation of the Nile. But all thoſe armaments by ſea and land could never have acted with any ſucceſs, in the invaſion of Ægypt, had not Phanes of Halicarnaſſus, an experienced officer, deſerted

deserted the service of Amasis who had disobliged him, and entered into that of Cambyfes. Besides giving such information about the state of the Ægyptian affairs as served to encourage the Persians and quicken the enterprize; he advised them to gain the friendship of an *Arabian* Prince, who, he knew, could, upon terms, be engaged to provide the Persian army with water in their march thro' the desert lying between Palestine and Ægypt, which could not be passed in less than three days; and where a supply, so absolutely necessary, was otherways impossible to be obtained.

CAMBYSES, luckily following the prudent advice of Phanes, prevented an evident danger to which his forces would have been exposed in marching to the borders of Ægypt. They found, stationed in the places of the desert where they encamped, a number of camels, which the *Arabian* King, according

cording to his engagement, had sent loaded with hides filled with water: and, after passing safely thro' the parched plains, they arrived near Pelusium. At this town, which was situated upon one of the mouths of the *Nile*, the King of Ægypt had posted his army. But it was Psammenitus who now reigned: his father Amasis, against whom Cambyfes entertained resentment, being dead some months before. The two armies having come to an engagement, the Ægyptians were defeated and fled with the utmost precipitation into Memphis, the capital of that district of Ægypt, and the usual place of residence for the kings. A Mitylenean vessel was immediately sent up the Nile, having on board a herald to summon the city to surrender: but the inhabitants, having seized the ship, took and tore in pieces every man that was in it. This was the deed of the furious multitude, always inconsiderate and

and cruel, even in despair. Memphis was soon taken by the Persians, and ample revenge inflicted for this horrid offence.

SINCE the success of Cambyfes, in his war upon Ægypt, marked, to that country so famous in antiquity, a fatal Æra; many unhappy memorials of which, the Ægyptians, for generations after, complained, were still presented to them, in the devastation of their temples, in the destruction of their sepulchres and public buildings, and the defacing of their sacred inscriptions: it seems requisite to mention the actions of the Persian Monarch, shameful and monstrous as they were, in every circumstance. He was still attended by Croesus, who had, as we may easily suppose, from his knowledge of Cambyfes's temper, by this time declined taking any part in public counsels; tho' he endeavoured to divert or oppose the

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particular

particular eruptions of his fury, which were terrible to all about him.

TEN days after Memphis surrendered, Cambyfes caused Pfammenitus to be led out into the fuburbs; where the place and manner in which he was expofed, together with fome Ægyptians of the firft rank, publifhed more diftinctly the fudden overthrow of one who had continued only fix months upon the throne; and gave Cambyfes opportunity to make his brutal obfervations upon the behaviour of a king, when he witneffed his difgrace and misery aggravated by the following fad fpectacle. In Pfammenitus's view, his daughter appeared in the habit of a flave, carrying a pitcher to draw water; and followed by feveral other young women of high birth, who were all covered with the fame wretched garb. As they paff by and caft their eyes on their fathers who flood in company with the Ægyptian King, they burft
into

into loud shrieks and pitiful tears; which their fathers, in the same anguish of heart, returned: all but Psammenitus, who, at the sight of them, bowed his face to the ground. After them, his son came up at the head of two thousand Ægyptians, all young men of the same age. They had ropes about their necks and bits in their mouths; being in that condition pushed on in order to their being sacrificed, by way of retaliation for the murder of those on board the Mitylenean ship. For the decision of the king's judges was, That, for every one who had been massacred by the people of Memphis, ten Ægyptians of the first order should be put to death. Psammenitus seeing them and his son at their head, as they moved along to receive their cruel doom; he did not bemoan them with doleful cries, like the Ægyptians who were placed by him, but behaved in the same way as when he beheld his daughter. Imme-

diately after this, a person, who had lived with him as one of his most intimate friends, discovered himself in the crowd, having the miserable aspect of misfortune and poverty, joined with the helpless infirmities of declining age. He begged alms of the soldiers, and implored relief of Psammenitus and the Egyptians who were with him in the suburbs. Psammenitus, struck at the sight of his distress, raised his voice in a lamentable tone; and calling this old companion by name, discovered the impressions of grief in his mind by beating himself upon the head. Three Persians, who had been appointed to observe the unhappy King's motions, reported the particulars of his behaviour to Cambyfes. The account they gave being very surprizing, he caused inquire of Psammenitus, Why, after seeing, without any expressions of sorrow, his daughter ignominiously treated and his son dragged to execution, he had shewn himself

himself so much afflicted at the appearance of that man who was known to be none of his kindred. His answer was: "Son of Cyrus! my domestic
 "woes are felt too deeply to be be-
 "wailed; but the distressed condition
 "of a familiar friend was a subject of
 "tears; when I beheld him, who en-
 "joyed the greatest plenty and af-
 "fluence, exposed to sufferings and
 "poverty in the verge of old age."

All who heard this reply were touched with it; Croesus melted into tears; the Persians wept in Cambyse's presence; so that his unrelenting breast yielded a little to compassion: He gave orders to save the life of Psammenitus's son; and to bring the father from the suburbs into the place where he kept his court. But those that were sent with this message found the son had been first dispatched in the slaughter.

FROM Memphis, Cambyse proceeded to Sais, the burial-place of the

Ægyptian kings; and there revenged himself upon Amasis's dead body: He caused it, when taken out of the tomb, to be scourged, pinched, and gored before him, and then to be thrown into the fire; an abuse, so much the more horrid, as it violated the religion both of the Persians and Ægyptians. The former worshipped the fire, and thought that what was divine ought not to be fed with a human carcass: The latter believed it to be a living creature that devoured whatever it seized upon, and, after being satiated, expired with its food. They allowed no dead body to become a prey to animals, but employed great art and pains to preserve them from putrefaction.

CAMBYSES, elated with the success that attended him in Ægypt, thought himself now capable of the greatest undertakings. He took a resolution to carry on three different expeditions at the same time; by employing his sea-forces against the Carthaginians, and his land-

land-army against the Hammonians and Æthiopians. But the Phœnicians, who furnished and manned his fleet, refused to serve against the people of Carthage who were their friends and allies; and the King of Persia found it impossible to compel them. The spies he sent into Æthiopia, under the name and appearance of ambassadors, were challenged and ridiculed by the King, who bid them bear his bow as a present to their master, and tell him, that, when the Persians could manage one of that size with the same facility they had seen him do it, he might think of invading the Æthiopians. The Persian Monarch's pride was kindled into rage upon receiving this scornful message. Without any orders being given for providing his troops with necessaries, without considering the situation or distance of the country whither he intended to lead them, like one in a sudden frenzy, he began his march for Æthiopia. He had not got a fifth part of the way, when

when not only the little provision which his foldiers carried with them was consumed, but all the beasts of burden were devoured by them. In spite of this dangerous extremity he continued his desperate rout, till, the herbs and plants which the foldiers gleaned from the earth having totally failed in the wide desarts of sand, they began to cast lots for eating every tenth man. Then Cambyfes, dreading this dire effect of famine, was glad to retreat. After many lives were lost, he brought back his shattered army to Thebes. Fifty thousand men whom he had before detached from that place to plunder the Hammonians and burn the temple of their god, having advanced beyond a city called Oasis into the waste plains, met with a destruction so sudden and universal, that not one of them ever appeared to give an account of it; being probably, as the Hammonians reported, overwhelmed in the deep sands blown up by whirlwinds.

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BUT, what Cambyſes could not execute againſt the god of Hammon, he found eaſy to be atchieved in the city of Thebes ; where the Ægyptian ſuperſtition was diſplayed in the pompous fabric and rich furniture of their numerous temples : all of them being pillaged and burnt by his orders. And yet what was ſaved from the flames amounted to a prodigious ſum ; three hundred talents in gold, ſays Diodorus *, and two thouſand three hundred in ſilver. When he returned again to Memphis, the rejoicings of the people there threw him into a violent anger. He called the magiſtrates before him, and inſiſted that their public mirth was a deſigned mockery of the late diſaſters he had ſuffered. In vain they aſſured him, that whenever their god Apis vouchſafed, as at that time, to make his appearance, he was always welcomed by ſuch expreſſions of general

* Lib. I. page 43.

ral joy. He told them, they were putting a lie upon him; and commanded them to be slain. Having next summoned the priests, and received from them the same answer about the festival; he required to see Apis: When the four-footed god was presented to him, his indignation and fury was the more inflamed; he drew out his dagger and stuck it into the thigh of the beast. "O stupid generation!" said he with a sneering countenance, "what deities are these of flesh and blood, who can feel the smart of a wound! But this is worthy of the Ægyptians!" Having spoken thus, he commanded the priests to be taken and scourged, and all who continued the festival to be put to death. It was no wonder that the Ægyptians imputed Cambyfes's cruel treatment of them and their gods to madness and the distemper of his brain. Herodotus alledges that there needed to be no plainer proof of the

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the unsound state of his mind than his deriding and abusing the religious worship and customs of a people. For, says he, were it proposed to men of different countries to chuse, out of all sacred institutions, those that might be esteemed the best, they would agree, in every nation, to give the preference to their own. Who then, but a delirious person, would pretend to ridicule any particular people for this attachment!

CAMBYSES's hatred of the superstitious worship and rites of Ægypt was further marked by many other insults and severities. In these we might suppose him, as a Persian, to have been influenced by the zeal of his nation, which endured not the worshipping the deity under any other image but that of fire, had not his whole behaviour testified that the barbarity of his temper was not to be heightened, even by such a motive. It was plainly from savageness of nature that he acted; making no distinction among the objects of his resentment.

sentment. His only brother Smerdis became odious to him for having shown the strength of his arm, by drawing within two fingers breadth the King of Æthiopia's bow; which none of the Persians could do. He sent him away into Persia: and having, a short time after, dreamed that Smerdis had ascended the throne, he obliged Prexaspes, one of his chief confidants, to go and murder him secretly. His sister Meroe, with whom he set the first example to the Persians of incestuous marriage, found, first, her beauty pernicious, and then her tenderness fatal to her. She died of an abortion, occasioned by a blow he gave her for signifying her regret of Smerdis's death.

CROESUS was not merely spectator of a scene so full of distraction and misery: as one with whom the sentiments of humanity were ever prevalent, his mind would be affected with painful concern; as being obliged to continual attendance upon the Tyrant, he had to bear

bear with his fury, and to endeavour sometimes to amuse, without increasing, his fits of folly and detestable pride. How delicate a spirit he had, and easily shocked with the ruder transports of Cambyfes's passion, may be understood from the following instance ; which shews both his regard for Cyrus's memory and his way of dealing with the haughty temper of his son. Cambyfes, at a meeting of Persian lords where Croesus was present, required them to declare, " What figure they " thought he made, when compared " with his father ?" They all replied, " That he was greater than Cyrus ; " since he was not only in possession " of all his conquests, but had added " the dominion of Ægypt and the sea " to the Persian empire." Croesus, whom the gross flattery of the answer offended, could not forbear to correct it immediately in this pleasant manner :
" Son of Cyrus, thou art not to be
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“equalled to thy father; for thou hast
“not yet a son such as he left thee.”
Cambyfes, tho’ naturally fufpicious, as
well as proud, was pleafed with the
nice and agreeable turn which Cræfus
gave to the fubject.

PREXASPES, the King’s favourite,
inadvertently gave too plain a hint a-
bout his excefs in drinking; which oc-
casioned his fon’s being fportfully mur-
thered before his eyes. In that and
many other inftances it appeared, that
Cambyfes was neither to be moved by
reafonable admonition, nor any perfon
forgiven who fhould have the boldnefs
to offer it. Cræfus, however, thought
himfelf bound in duty, for once, to
expoftulate with him, and freely re-
prefent the dangerous tendency of his
actions. He therefore fpoke to him
in this manner: “Indulge not, O
“Prince! at fuch a rate, the impetuo-
“fity of thy youth and temper; but
“take care to reftrain it, and govern
“thyfelf.

“ thyself. It is surely for thy good to
“ be considerate. Every wiseman at-
“ tends to the consequence of what is
“ done by him: but thou, without a-
“ ny just cause, takest away the lives
“ of men who are thy subjects; thou
“ sparest not their children. If thou
“ dost persist in this course, there is
“ reason to fear that the Persians will
“ revolt from thee. Thy father Cyrus
“ strictly charged me not to withhold
“ my advice in whatever concerned
“ thy welfare.” Cræsus, having spoke
with so much freedom, was answered
by Cambyfes in the following strain:
“ Dost thou too presume to give me
“ directions? Well indeed hath thy
“ own kingdom prospered by thy coun-
“ sels! and much was my father ob-
“ liged to them, when he was per-
“ suaded by thee to pass the Araxes,
“ and engage the Massagætæ who of-
“ fered to have given him battle! But
“ thy desert thou shalt have, who, by
“ wretched

“wretched management, ruined thy-
“self and the Lydian kingdom, and
“destroyed Cyrus who followed thy
“advice: it is long since I have look-
“ed for such an opportunity.” Having so expressed himself, he laid hold of his bow, designing to strike Crœsus dead with the arrow: but he was disappointed by Crœsus instantly retiring. Cambyfes, seeing him escape, called to his servants to seize him and put him to death. But they, knowing his way, chused rather to keep Crœsus concealed; in hopes, that, if the King should relent and call for Crœsus (as in like cases was not unusual with him) they might be rewarded for having saved his life: if this did not happen, it was still in their power to do as they were required. A short time after, Cambyfes having asked, Where Crœsus was? some of his attendants, to whom the order for his death had been given, made answer, That he was safe by their
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care, and that they could produce him alive. The King said he was glad of it; but declared that they should not pass unpunished who had disobeyed his command: and they paid for it accordingly with their lives. So dangerous it is to try any experiment with one of a frantic humour, even tho' in the way of complying with it!

Our historian here concludes his account of Cræsus. The few anecdotes that other authors have related concerning him are borrowed from it, and therefore need not be added as a supplement; especially, since the only article in which it is deficient, the particular manner and place of his death, is mentioned in none of them. As he experienced a change of fortune more dismal than any death, and was once and again threatened with a violent one; we may well suppose that, in whatever way it came, he was prepared to meet it without surprize or dismay:

may: and, tho' he could not make his exit, like Cyrus in Xenophon, rejoicing in the constant tenor of his fortune, and calling upon his friends for a clap of applause; that he would most chearfully resign a life, over which a thick shade of adversity was drawn. In the prosperous part of it, he was inclined to vanity rather than pride: he was fond of warlike fame, and acquired it; but his talents and disposition were yet more adapted to policy and the arts of peace. His ambition was not unbounded: he would have been satisfied with his fortune, had not Artys's death and the oracle's flattery disturbed the enjoyment of it. His joy in the prospect of success and renown was too immoderate; but the shock of disappointment and ill fortune did not throw him into the opposite extreme of abject submission or sullen despair. His misfortunes, which led him to entertain the gloomy opinion of
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an invidious destiny, produced no change in the natural mildness and serenity of his temper. The benignity and tenderness of his affections were displayed in several relations; the agreeable delicacy of his manners, his integrity and friendship, proved in the most singular of all: when having, without meanness or flattery, engaged the esteem and confidence of Cyrus who had dethroned him, he ever testified an inviolable fidelity to him and a real concern for his interest. For, tho' he believed in the ability of the god of Delphos to give counsel about the unknown events of war, he was not to be convinced that ingratitude or dissimulation might be sanctified by his example. A more splendid character of a king may easily be found; but hardly any one more laudable, and with so many of the ingredients of virtue.

F I N I S.

